

Pakistan dismisses Pressler's fears

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistani authorities Sunday dismissed as unfounded a U.S. senator's statement that he feared the creation of a nuclear-armed Islamic federation stretching from Turkey to Pakistan. Senator Larry Pressler told a news conference in New Delhi on Saturday that Muslim-dominated former Soviet republics of Central Asia could join such a federation, making it a major force in the world. "Such baseless apprehensions hardly need any comment," Pakistan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mohammad Siddiq Khan Kanju said after meeting Mr. Pressler in Islamabad on Sunday. The official AFP news agency quoted Mr. Kanju as saying he had made clear to Mr. Pressler that Pakistan's nuclear programme was peaceful. The senator is the author of a legislative amendment which links U.S. aid to Pakistan with proof that it is not developing nuclear arms. All U.S. military and economic aid to Pakistan was halted in October 1990 because of "suspicions that Islamabad's nuclear programme was aimed at producing weapons. Pakistan calls the law discriminatory because it does not apply to its arch-rival India.

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King honours Anglican bishop

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein has conferred the Jordanian al Kawkab Medal of the Second Order on Bishop Samir Kafiti, head of the Anglican Church of Jerusalem and the Middle East. Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber presented the medal to the bishop at a special ceremony held at the minister's office Sunday.

Libyan envoy leaves

AMMAN (J.T.) — Libyan Agriculture Minister Abdul Majid Al Qatoud left Amman Sunday after a brief visit to Jordan which he conveyed to His Majesty King Hussein a message from Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi. The message dealt with accusations linking Libya to the bombing of U.S. and French planes and clarified that Libya stand on the issue. Mr. Qatoud was seen off at the airport by Agriculture Minister Fayez Khassawneh and the Libyan ambassador to Jordan.

CIA panel recommends partial lifting of secrecy

NEW YORK (R) — A Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) panel has recommended that a large number of secret documents be declassified and urged that its officials become increasingly accessible to the public, the New York Times reported Sunday. The newspaper quoted intelligence officials as saying the internal panel, established by CIA Director Robert Gates, was exploring ways to lift the veil of secrecy at the agency. Dubbed the Openness Task Force, the panel has recommended that Mr. Gates consider options including an increase in on-the-record interviews, public speeches and public testimony to Congress by senior officials. The panel has also recommended that the CIA declassify millions of pages of older documents, some of them dating back to World War I, and make them available to the public. The newspaper said Mr. Gates was expected to make his decision on his panel's recommendations by the end of January.

Japanese trade minister visits Saudi Arabia

BAHRAIN (R) — Japan's senior Trade Minister Kozo Watanabe held talks in Saudi Arabia Sunday with Oil Minister Hisham Nazer on ways of boosting oil cooperation, the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said. Mr. Watanabe, Japan's minister of international trade and industry, arrived in Saudi Arabia Saturday evening at the start of a tour which will also take him to Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. Japan imports nearly two-third of its oil needs from Gulf Arab oil exporters and Japanese companies are involved in joint oil projects in the area. Mr. Watanabe later met Saudi Industry and Electricity Minister Abdul Aziz Abdullah Al Zamel to discuss ways of developing industrial cooperation and increasing Japanese industrial investment in the kingdom, the agency said.

British Labour takes opinion poll lead

LONDON (R) — Boosted by a five-point opinion poll lead, Britain's opposition Labour Party Sunday stepped up its battle to oust Prime Minister John Major from power at a general election which must be held by July. Labour leader Neil Kinnock accused Mr. Major's Conservatives of behaving "like a second-rate opposition" and said the ruling party, in power since 1979, had been "paralysed into inaction" by the economic recession now gripping the country. In the first public opinion poll of 1992, published in the Independent on Sunday newspaper, Labour won 45 per cent support compared with 40 per cent for the Conservatives and 12 per cent for the Liberal Democrats. A poll last December put the Conservatives at 41 per cent against 40 for Labour and 14 for the Liberal Democrats.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تلغراف يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الراي»

Breaking impasse first item on bilaterals today

Combined agency dispatches

ARAB-ISRAELI peace talks resume in Washington Monday, with only three days for negotiators to break an impasse on the negotiating status of the Palestinians and move on to the real issues at the heart of the Middle East conflict. Officials from both sides said this third round of peace talks, involving Israel, Syria, Lebanon and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, would finally convene early on Monday, six days after the date originally agreed.

Israelis say they intend to leave Washington Wednesday evening, giving the parties only three days to settle a dispute over the status of the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation that blocked progress in the last round of talks.

recess in the last round of talks.

The bilateral talks, inaugurated by the Madrid Middle East peace conference last October, adjourned in Washington on Dec. 18 after six days of discussions. Arab negotiators delayed their return to Washington to protest Israel's plan to expel 12 Palestinian activists from the occupied territories until the United Nations Security Council strongly condemned the expulsions. Even though the last Arab delegation arrived in Washington on Friday, the sides were unable to meet over the weekend.

Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian officials originally said they were willing to meet on Sunday, but this changed after all the Arab delegations held a coordinating meeting on Friday.

Diplomatic sources said

the Syrians told the other delegates all three sets of negotiations should convene on the same day and the Palestinians and Jordanians should not get out ahead of the other Arabs. Officials and analysts said the key test of this new round would be whether the Israelis and Palestinians could solve their dispute over the status and functions of the joint delegation that the Palestinians form with Jordan. "We believe we can soon finalise the procedural stage and move to agenda and subjects leading to substance if the rules are respected," said chief Israeli negotiator Elyakim Rubenstein. The sides agree there should be two-track negotiations between Israel and Jordan on the one hand and

Israel and the Palestinians on

the other. But the Israelis are resisting Palestinian demands for virtual recognition as a separate delegation when negotiating Palestinian issues, seeing the move as a dangerous precedent that could in the future lead to Palestinian independence. While they argued this point in the previous round of talks, both sides refused to enter the negotiating room at the State Department. Delegation heads spent six days wedged together on a couch in a corridor. The aim of these talks is to agree on interim self-rule for 1.75 million Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip by November. Israeli officials say they have detailed proposals on self-rule that they will present as

soon as the procedural dispute is solved.

Marwan Muasher, spokesman for the Jordanian delegation, said that the Jordanian, Palestinian and Israeli delegations would meet Monday after a tripartite meeting of the heads of the three delegations. Dr. Muasher said an Israeli proposal presented to both the Jordanian and Palestinian delegations contained positive and negative elements. However, he said, the first day will show whether Israel was serious in the quest for peace in the Middle East. The Palestinian team is backed in this round by the chief political adviser of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat, Nabil Shaath. The PLO is officially banned from the talks but

Washington granted Dr. Shaath a visa for this round,

although he was denied one during the December talks. His presence angered Israel, which opposes any role by the PLO in the talks. The Cairo-based Shaath, who carries an Egyptian passport, is staying at the same hotel as the Palestinian delegation and is in constant contact with them and the PLO leadership in Tunis. Dr. Shaath, known to be a pragmatic negotiator and long-time peace advocate, was the main architect of the PLO's decision to sanction Palestinian participation in the peace talks. He observed the October Madrid Middle East peace conference for the PLO. The chief Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian negotiators may hold an informal

session Sunday night, sources said.

The meeting of Mr. Rubenstein, Jordan's Abdul Salam Al Majali and Palestinian Haidar Abdul Shafi may determine whether a compromise is possible. Israel has received no word, meanwhile, from the Syrian and Lebanese delegations. The negotiations with Syria concern Israel's occupation of the Golan Heights and Israel's quest for recognition in a peace treaty. The negotiations with Lebanon deal with Israel's occupation of a zone inside Lebanon, which Israel and an Israeli-backed militia control. "We have been encouraging the parties to promptly set a starting time for the negotiations," Richard Boucher, a State Department spokesman, said Friday.

Algeria cancels elections

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Algeria's High Security Council Sunday cancelled the nation's general election which gave Muslim fundamentalists a landslide lead in the first round.

In a statement, the council, meeting in emergency session after the resignation of President Chadli Benjedid, announced "the impossibility of continuing the electoral process until necessary conditions were achieved for the normal functioning of institutions."

The statement was carried on Algiers Radio and the Algerian news agency AFS. The second round of the elections was due to be held Thursday.

Council members include acting head of state Abdel Malek Benhabyles, who took over from Mr. Chadli, top members of the army and security forces, the prime minister, and the defence, interior and justice ministers.

It said it had "decided to take charge provisionally of all questions likely to put into question public order and the security of the state."

The council said it was "in permanent session and would sit without break to meet its obligations..." caused by the vacuum left by Mr. Chadli's departure.

The following report was compiled before the announcement

of the cancellation of the Algerian elections.

Algeria's leaders went into crisis talks on Sunday amid forecasts that elections effectively won by Islamic fundamentalists would be scrapped and a council set up to rule after President Chadli Benjedid's resignation.

Troops backed by tanks guarded the main government buildings and security forces manned roadblocks, sent in by Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali after Mr. Benjedid stepped down on Saturday.

The cabinet went into session. So too did leaders of the three parties who won seats last month in the first round of the general election.

The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), planning to make Algeria an Islamic state, took a landslide lead in the first multi-party parliamentary poll in the country and most of the Arab World.

Outside FIS headquarters in Algiers, young militants gathered waiting for directions from their leaders.

After meeting in secret, the FIS issued a statement insisting the elections continue, and calling Mr. Benjedid's resignation a "piece of theatre aimed at suppressing the people and cancelling the results."

Provisional FIS leader Abdul Kader Hachani called on Algerians to be "ready to abort any

conspiracy aiming to liquidate their project for society," — an Islamic state.

Small Islamic parties called for bloodshed to be avoided. Sheikh Abdullah Djaballah, head of Nahdha, said supporters of an Islamic state would "not offer a chance to those who want to push them to bloody confrontation."

Hamas leader Mabfoud Nahmah called for vigilance to "prevent the country plunging into conflicts."

Hocine Ait Ahmad, leader of the Socialist Forces Front (FFS) which won 25 seats last month, called Mr. Benjedid's departure a "coup d'etat aimed at stopping the democratic process."

Mr. Ghozali called for calm. Apart from the presence of security forces there was little sign of unusual activity in Algiers, though some shops seemed to be closing earlier than normal.

The army said it would "carry out its duty to the nation in responding resolutely to the demand of the head of government ... to safeguard public order."

An Algerian official said acting head of state Abdel Malek Benhabyles was expected to announce cancellation of the elections and the formation of the ruling council.

A French television station said the constitution would be suspended and a special council formed by Mr. Ghozali, Defence



Chadli Benjedid

Minister Khaled Nezzar and other military and civilian figures. Mr. Nezzar has already effectively controlled daily life in the country twice during states of siege imposed in 1988 and last June after riots. One Western diplomat said he expected a state of emergency to be declared.

Another said military hospitals had put doctors on alert for possible violent reaction to an announcement scrapping the poll. An Algerian close to the military said it had a tight hold on the Islamic bastions of Bab Al Oued and Belcourt and intended to keep it that way, the diplomat added.

The two were centres of fierce (Continued on page 5) Related stories on page 2

Sharif Zeid launches serious public administrative reform

AMMAN (Petra) — The government is determined to carry out reform in public administration in Jordan and the reform will be led to a timetable to which all government departments will be committed, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker announced Sunday.

The prime minister said that he would personally follow up measures related to the reforms and announce to the public areas where progress has been achieved towards reform and would not hesitate in exposing shortcomings and delays in achieving progress in this reform.

Addressing a meeting of the Civil Service Council at the Prime Ministry, Sharif Zeid said that the government plans to introduce measures by which "excelling employees will be rewarded and those who fail to carry out their duty will be held responsible for their shortcomings and have to account for their failure."

The time has come for a comprehensive revision of the public administration system in Jordan because there can be no meaning for planning to introduce economic and social reform as long as the public administrative system remains backward and outdated and with employees

lacking incentives," said the prime minister.

He said that the government plans to introduce a law for the creation of an independent body which will be entrusted with modernising legislation in accordance with the provisions of the National Charter and will try to create a national integrated data bank providing information that can make the socio-economic development programme a success.

There is no alternative to embarking on immediate measures to deal with the points of weakness, and there can be no alternative to working out an integrated plan designed to coordinate work among the various government departments concerned with development and to promote the work of human resources, Sharif Zeid said.

The country's civil services system provides for the creation of special units to carry out administration development and offer training to employees in every ministry or government departments, said the prime minister. Based on these provisions, this council bears the responsibility for general planning for development while the Civil Service Commission shoulders the responsibility for helping to carry

out reform so that the country's socio-economic development programme can go ahead unhindered, he said.

Sharif Zeid said Civil Service Council has exerted efforts to lay down a comprehensive plan for administrative reform which started in 1990 in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). But, he noted, the many changes that occurred in Jordan, specially in the social and economic fields, slowed down the public administrative development programme and it is to be noted that the Gulf war and its consequences on the Kingdom weakened the government system's performance.

Sharif Zeid reminded the council that the royal message to the government upon its formation last November specifically emphasised the need for carrying out administrative reform and laying the foundation for measures to stem such practices as favouritism so as to open the way for the government to absorb only the qualified and distinguished.

He said that the government had pledged before Parliament to carry out reform within a limited

(Continued on page 5)

Gulf states to aid former Soviet Islamic republics

WASHINGTON (R) — Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Arab states have decided to channel the bulk of their aid to former Soviet Union to predominantly Islamic republics in Central Asia to stop the growth of fundamentalism.

Saudi officials in Washington said this decision would be conveyed to the conference on coordinating aid to the former Soviet Union, due to be held in Washington on Jan. 22-23.

Up to 60 foreign ministers and heads of international financial organisations are expected to attend the conference which is aimed at helping the people of the former Soviet Union get through the winter and plan a coordinated aid effort for the future.

Saudi Arabia and the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) of which it is a member have been invited to the conference. The United States, strapped by its own budgetary constraints, is hoping that rich nations of the world will come up with extra cash for Russia and other republics.

"Our main concern is the six Central Asian republics which are predominantly Islamic and are being largely ignored by the West," said one Saudi source in Washington.

The six are: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Azerbaijan.

Kazakhstan has attracted the most attention in the West because of the nuclear weapons stationed on its soil.

The aid conference is to focus on critical short-term needs of food, medicine, energy and shelter, technical assistance and logistics for distributing aid.

Saudi Arabia pledged \$1.5 billion to the Soviet Union last year, partly to reward it for support during the Gulf war. Other GCC nations pledged a further \$1.5 billion, the bulk of that sum coming from Kuwait, but the money was never disbursed before the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Analysts said a fierce battle for supremacy was unfolding in the Central Asian republics between Turkey and Iran. Saudi Arabia and Pakistan were also trying to exert influence on developments.

The governments of the republics are mainly Western-leaning and see Turkey as a successful model of a secular state that has an Islamic population but yet has steered a course towards democracy and a free market.

But sentiment on the street is different, according to officials and analysts. There, sympathy for the Iranian model of a state governed by Islamic law is growing.

The fear is that the Iranian model will gain support, fuelled by economic hardship and discontent.

Shamir and Levy try to dampen talk of early polls

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Foreign Minister David Levy tried to put a damper Sunday on talk of early elections that could halt Mideast peace talks.

Shamir aide Yossi Ahimeir went on both Israeli radio stations to say that the prime minister had been elected to serve a four-year term and would make "all efforts" to do so.

"The elections should be held as scheduled," added Mr. Ahimeir, who is manager of the prime minister's office.

Mr. Ahimeir's comments on Israel radio and army radio came a day after legislator Shimon Shetret of the opposition Labour Party announced that he and Michael Eitan, a member of Mr. Shamir's Likud Bloc, would propose moving the elections forward to this June.

The parliamentary elections are scheduled Nov. 3. But far-right members of Mr. Shamir's cabinet have threatened to try to topple the government and bring about elections as a way to halt the peace talks if Israel moved towards giving up occupied Arab territory.

Mr. Ahimeir added he could not rule out the possibility of early elections.

"The problem is if the government loses its majority base, there would be no other way to maintain this government. The only path would be to go to early elections," he said.

Mr. Levy referred to the talk of early elections as a "trial balloon" that could harm peace efforts.

"Everything we are trying to do in the international political field could be harmed and interpreted as if we are trying to get out of going ahead with our own initiative," Mr. Levy said before leaving on a trip to Portugal.

Early elections have always been seen as an option for Mr. Shamir if he felt he was being pushed too hard by the United States to make concessions at the Arab-Israeli peace talks in Washington.

Shamir opposes giving up any territory that Israel seized in the 1967 war, while the U.S. position is that Israel should return land in exchange for peace.

But Mr. Shamir is also believed to want to secure Israel's request for \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees to help absorb a wave of 350,000 Soviet Jewish immigrants before upsetting the peace talks.

Minister-without-Portfolio Rehavam Zeevi, whose Moledet party advocates expelling Arabs from the occupied territories, renewed his threat to leave the coalition Sunday.

He told Israeli Radio that his party would pull out if Israel went ahead with an offer by limited autonomy to Palestinians, saying a document that Israeli negotiators gave to Arabs makes such a concession.

Israeli army ordered to open hearings on expulsions

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM

(Agencies) — Israel's highest court on Sunday ordered the army to open to the public its appeal hearings against expulsion orders for 12 Palestinians, the army said.

"This is the first time military expulsion appeal hearings will be conducted with open doors," the army said.

Justice ministry spokeswoman Ety Eshed said the high court of justice ruled that the principle of public discussion outweighed government objections based on "security" concerns.

Israel's announcement on Jan. 2 that it was expelling 12 Palestinians from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip disrupted Middle East peace talks.

The occupation power ordered the expulsions after unidentified meo killed a settler in Gaza.

Arab delegations delayed leaving for the next round of peace talks until the U.N. Security Council condemned the expulsions.

The military appeal panel last week rejected requests to open hearings to the press. Military sources said the panel wanted to prevent exposure of classified material.

But defence lawyers said in their high court petition classified evidence was not revealed in appeal hearings.

U.S. papers appear to be waging anti-Arab campaign

Special from Washington

SUNDAY'S U.S. press reports were nothing short of alarming. With negotiations set to resume this morning, yesterday's newspapers seemed to engage in a campaign against the Arabs, focusing on Israeli settlers' fears and "security" concerns, and what some commentators see as Arab "terror," rather than discussing prospects for the peace process or the weekend's developments.

Only the Philadelphia Inquirer carried a report on the resumption of the peace talks, noting that the chief Jordanian, Palestinian and Israeli negotiators might meet informally last night — a meeting which "may determine whether a compromise is possible" in the dispute over negotiating the two tracks.

The Washington Post ran a long feature on the attitudes of Jewish settlers towards the peace process, while the New York Times story headlined, "Israeli settlers see shift by Arabs to firearms," citing Israeli settlers' charges that the Palestinians are conducting a violent campaign against them. The settlers also criticise what they see as a weak response by the Israeli government.

The Washington Post also carried an opinion by Lally Weymouth, daughter of Washington Post chair Katherine Graham, attacking the "Arab terror campaign against Israel." The article is accompanied by a bla-

tantly racist caricature of what is apparently an Arab face, wrapped in a kaffiyeh with only large, fierce eyes revealed, skulls flashing in the eyeballs. The Washington Times ran a similar commentary by Cal Thomas on what he considers Palestinian "terrorist" groups.

The other trend in Sunday's papers was a reflection on the Gulf war, nearly a year after the U.S. intervention. The theme of such a commentary and analysis is a questioning of whether the war, in retrospect, has proven a "success" for President George Bush. The Washington Post carried a lengthy post-Gulf war analysis by Jim Hoagland, as well as an opinion by George Will, both highlighting what was not achieved by the U.S. effort.

According to Mr. Hoagland, though the world was transformed last year partly as a result of the war, "equally striking... is how much the war did not change our resolve." Mr. Hoagland adds: "Few conflicts have ever accomplished so much so quickly and yet left so much urgent unfinished business." Mr. Will suggests in his commentary: "The war diplomacy has left lingering anxieties about sovereignty and constitutionality, and about the process and substance of Bush's foreign policy." In the New York Times, Anthony Lewis shared this emphasis on the president's role: "The way we went to war marked a new high in the unilateral power of the president of the United States."

Levy to visit China soon; full diplomatic ties in offing

PEKING (R) — Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy will visit China in late January, setting the final piece in place for full diplomatic ties.

Mr. Levy will visit at the invitation of Foreign Minister Qian Qichen, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said on Sunday. It did not say when he would arrive, but diplomats widely expect the visit to begin on Jan. 22.

Mr. Levy's trip to Peking represents the final step in Israel's drive for full diplomatic ties with Peking, the only permanent member of the United Nations Security Council without official links to the Jewish state.

China, eager to boost its image as an international player, hopes normalisation of ties with Israel will increase its role in the Middle East peace process, diplomats said.

Israel has reportedly made full diplomatic recognition a condition for increased Chinese participation.

Peking laid the groundwork for official recognition last year by welcoming confidential visits by a series of high-level Israeli officials, despite China's long, outspoken support for the Palesti-

nian cause. The process reached a climax in November, when Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Arens made a secret trip to China just after the start of Arab-Israeli peace talks in Madrid.

Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat followed with a visit to Peking in December, when China's leaders publicly vowed solidarity but privately hinted that recognition for Israel was out for off.

China officially recognises Mr. Arafat as head of the State of Palestine.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said on Dec. 27 he expected diplomatic ties with China soon after Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Yang Fuchang paid a confidential visit to Israel.

Although officially on opposite sides of the fence, China and Israel have had unofficial links in the past — including a widely reported secret deal in 1987 to secure Israeli help to upgrade China's missile technology.

Western news reports have said Israel remained an important source of military technology for China after the United States

banned such sales following Peking's crackdown on pro-democracy protests in 1989.

Israel opened an unofficial liaison office in Peking in 1990, with a former Israeli ambassador as its adviser. China maintains a tourism office in Israel.

China in November welcomed its first official trade delegation from Israel that included representatives of El Al, Israel's airline, as well as the Israeli Military Industry.

Peking's pragmatic foreign policy is opening new roads in other directions.

South Korea, already an important source for trade and investment in China, has a trade office in Peking and is expected to establish formal links soon.

Last month, China announced it was swapping unofficial offices with South Korea.

In a brief news release carried by the New China News Agency, the foreign ministry did not give a date for Mr. Levy's arrival or say how long the trip would last.

Mr. Levy last week declined to comment on a report that his visit would begin on Jan. 22 and last for at least five days.

Kuwait lifts censorship on local press

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — The government Sunday lifted censorship of the local press, in effect since 1986, Minister of Information Badr Al Yacoub announced.

Mr. Yacoub told the Associated Press the government censors would not be going to the seven local newspapers Sunday night.

"The editors-in-chief now take responsibility for what their papers publish," said Mr. Yacoub, adding that he was sure Kuwaiti journalists "fully understand their role" in rebuilding the country.

"This is the first step towards democracy since liberation," said Ahmad Al Rabe'i, a columnist and a prominent member of the Kuwaiti opposition.

Censorship was imposed on the press after the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, dissolved parliament in 1986. After liberation of the emirate from a seven-month Iraqi occupation, the emir promised elections for the coming October.

"I hope this will be followed by a wave of political relaxation that will lead to forming a new government that, in turn, can guarantee honest parliamentary elec-

tions," said Mr. Rabe'i, whose columns in the independent paper Al Qabas have been censored repeatedly.

The editor-in-chief of Al Qabas, Mohammad Al Saqr, said the lifting of censorship was a welcome "goodwill gesture" by the government. But he said the step was incomplete as long as the information minister had the right to take post-publication action against newspapers, including closing them down.

Censorship has eased since the war. Articles critical of government policies have been getting past the censors. But editors said articles on stateless Arabs, bad debts and security have been banned by the censors lately.

Tadeusz Karwecki, managing editor of the English-language Arab Times, said lifting censorship will make the political orientation of the papers "become more apparent."

Papers here started as political vehicles," explained the American editor. "They don't care very much for offering fair and balanced news."

Mr. Karwecki said he was certain that lifting censorship would "revive the spirit of the people" by allowing them to debate issues.

"This will make Kuwait something unique in the Gulf," said Mr. Karwecki, who worked in Saudi Arabia before coming to Kuwait before the Iraqi invasion.

The crown prince and prime minister, Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, had promised a number of editors-in-chief last week they would consider lifting censorship in light of a code of ethics they had prepared.

The code asks journalists to refrain from interfering with the internal affairs of "sisterly and friendly nations" and showing disrespect to their heads of state.

It also requires them to refrain from playing on ethnic or tribal differences. "This is a difficult test for the Kuwaiti press," said Abdullah Al Gazali, managing editor of the pro-government daily Al Fajr Al Jadid.

"I really hope that lifting censorship will not allow some writers to negatively affect our national solidarity," Mr. Gazali added.

Maxwell could have killed himself, reports say

LONDON (AP) — Two of Britain's leading pathologists dismissed French claims that Robert Maxwell was murdered, but added they could not rule out suicide, the Sunday Times reported.

The Mail on Sunday said the 68-year-old tycoon "died frantically to the side of his yacht in a desperate bid to save his life" before falling and drowning in the Atlantic on Nov. 5.

Both newspapers based their reports on experts' analyses of copies each obtained of a 130-minute videotape of an autopsy conducted in Israel before Mr. Maxwell was buried in occupied Jerusalem.

The Mail said the telltale clues that Mr. Maxwell tried to save his life were "two badly torn back muscles — one in his left shoulder and one in his lower back."

The Mail said it showed the tape of unidentified medical experts who said the torn muscles are consistent with a man of Mr. Maxwell's weight, estimated at up to 135 kilograms, grabbing at the rail of his yacht as he fell to his death.

The Sunday Times said the pathologists it consulted said contrary to a French report there was no evidence that Mr. Maxwell had been brutally beaten, and he had probably died by accident or natural causes.

But they left open the question of whether Mr. Maxwell took his own life, the newspaper said. Austin Gresham, professor of morbid anatomy at Cambridge University, and Dr. Peter Vanezis, head of department of forensic and toxicology at Charing Cross and Westminster Medical School, reviewed the videotape for the Sunday Times.

They said the injuries were consistent with an accidental fall from the boat, and that the forensic work on the body during the first autopsy in Grand Canary led to the wounds.

Mr. Vanezis said, "The idea that Robert Maxwell had been subject to a violent assault, or any way beaten up before his death, is in my view wildly inaccurate."

Mr. Gresham said, "If you add all this evidence to the fact that he was in his late sixties, was overweight and had other risk factors for heart disease, such as drinking and smoking, the likely cause of death would be a heart attack."

Paris Match last week said the Israeli autopsy found bruises on Mr. Maxwell's face, shoulders, stomach and calves. A French expert, Loie le Ribault, said the wounds indicated he was beaten before he fell or was thrown from his yacht.

Carlos Lopez de Lamela, chief pathologist of Las Palmas in the Canary Islands, who carried out the first autopsy, Thursday denied that Mr. Maxwell had been beaten.

Dr. Iain West, a British pathologist who attended the Israeli autopsy, also dismissed the idea that Mr. Maxwell died violently.

Still unresolved is whether insurance companies will pay a £20 million accidental death policy for Mr. Maxwell.

Recent disclosures about Mr. Maxwell's financial situation increased speculation that he committed suicide.

Authorities are investigating allegations that he diverted more than \$1.2 billion from two public corporations he controlled in a desperate attempt to deal with losses at his private companies and heavy debts.

Iraq quick in rebuilding

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq, making rapid progress in repairing Gulf war damage, says most of its power network, oil installations and military facilities are back in operation.

Government officials said Saturday 75 per cent of the power grid, the basic pillar of a modern industrial society, had been brought back on line in an all-out reconstruction drive after the war with a U.S.-led international coalition.

They said 85 per cent of oil refining capacity had been restored, as well as most of the pipelines, pumping stations and storage tanks hit in allied air attacks.

The officials, from various government ministries, were speaking to reporters at an exhibition in Baghdad designed to show Iraq's rapid recovery from the war.

Data on display show 99 of 123 bridges damaged or destroyed in the war have been repaired. Work is in progress on the rest.

One sign said 187 "military industry buildings" had been repaired and another 260 damaged military facilities were under reconstruction. There were no details on these installations.

Iraq agreed last March to scrap its weapons of mass destruction under U.N. ceasefire terms.

The "steadfastness and Defence Exhibition," in a palace on the bank of the Tigris River, is part of preparations to celebrate the Jan. 17 anniversary of the war's start.

Complete "before and after" scale models of wrecked and rebuilt bridges, collapsed buildings and bombed refineries, the exhibition is designed to show Iraq can withstand U.N. sanctions imposed after its troops seized Kuwait in August 1990.

Iraq has defied foreign predictions that war damage would take years to repair.

Last March, a special United Nations mission concluded: "Iraq has, for some time to come, been relegated to a pre-industrial age, but with the disabilities of post-industrial dependency on intensive use of energy and technology."

How much of the reconstruction consists of short-term solutions is difficult to tell. Officials said on Saturday the embargo made it impossible to repair war damage 100 per cent.

"Complete restoration of our capacity depends on spare parts we used to import," said Rashad, director general of power and distribution in the Industry Ministry.

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Last March, a special United Nations mission concluded: "Iraq has, for some time to come, been relegated to a pre-industrial age, but with the disabilities of post-industrial dependency on intensive use of energy and technology."

How much of the reconstruction consists of short-term solutions is difficult to tell. Officials said on Saturday the embargo made it impossible to repair war damage 100 per cent.

"Complete restoration of our capacity depends on spare parts we used to import," said Rashad, director general of power and distribution in the Industry Ministry.

under U.N. ceasefire terms. The "steadfastness and Defence Exhibition," in a palace on the bank of the Tigris River, is part of preparations to celebrate the Jan. 17 anniversary of the war's start.

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ty, told Reuters. "But our running capacity is nearly up to demand."

Most of Iraq's 25 power stations were hit in first hours of the air assault. Wave after wave of subsequent attacks cut electricity supplies throughout the country.

"Damage to our system was 88 per cent," Mr. Rashad said, "and we have repaired 75 per cent of that. Some villages in various parts of the country are still without power and some factories don't have enough but the grid is complete again."

The pace even defied Iraq's own estimates. Six months ago, officials said eight-hour blackouts would continue for a long time in big cities. Most now have power round the clock.

Iraq's rapid reconstruction has prompted government warnings of attempts to block progress.

"Now that the whole world has heard about Iraqi achievements in the field of reconstruction, the aggressors are trying new methods to harm Iraq," Prime Minister Mohammad Hamza Al Zubeidi said at the inauguration of the exhibition.

"These methods include threats, distortion, conspiracy, as well as new aggressive acts."

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Benjedid pushed the reforms that led to his departure

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Like Mikhail Gorbachev, Chadli Benjedid planted the seeds of democratic reform that brought his own party and his own political career to an impasse.

Algeria's president since 1979, a loyal member of the ruling party since independence in 1962, Mr. Benjedid announced on national television Saturday night that he was resigning.

He leaves his National Liberation Front (FLN) on the brink of annihilation as the fundamentalist Islamic Front (FIS) heads towards likely control of parliament after run-off elections on Thursday.

Less than three years ago, the FIS and all other opposition parties were illegal. But Mr. Benjedid, a pragmatic, low-profile leader, gave the go-ahead for a new constitution creating multi-party democracy and setting the stage for the elections which — in the first round Dec. 26 — thoroughly repudiated the FLN.

It won outright majorities in only 15 seats, compared to 188 for the fundamentalists.

Born to peasant parents in the eastern village of Sebba on April 14, 1929, Mr. Benjedid joined the liberation war against France in 1955, was wounded several times, and continued in the new nation's army after independence.

He caught the eye of a top revolutionary commander, Houari Boumedienne, and in 1964 was named army commander for the region around Oran, a post he held for 15 years.

He became a member of Algeria's Revolutionary Council in 1965, after the overthrow of President Ahmed Ben Bella and the installation of Mr. Boumedienne as the new leader.

After Mr. Boumedienne's death in 1978, Mr. Benjedid was nominated by the ruling party as his successor and was elected without opposition in January 1979.

He was reelected in 1984 and again in 1988, to a five-year term.

As president, he mixed determination with prudence, gradually freeing up the political system and encouraging some privatisation of the Marxist-oriented economy. He disliked ostentation and kept his personal life out of the public eye.

But deep social problems developed — high unemployment and a resentment by the lower classes of a small, privileged and often corrupt elite.

In October 1988, severe rioting wracked the country. At least 159 people, possibly many more, were killed, and Mr. Benjedid responded by calling a referendum that adopted the new, democratic constitution.

FLN rule began to unravel with

the 1988's riots sparked by high unemployment among the young.

Mr. Benjedid used the army to quell the riots but promised sweeping economic and political liberalisation.

Analysts agreed the riots were against the system, not Mr. Benjedid. He seized the opportunity to make changes which would have been unthinkable two years earlier.

The only candidate, he was re-elected for a third term with 81 per cent of the vote in December 1988 and changed the power structure, making government answerable to the National Assembly instead of the FLN.

The new constitution, approved by 73 per cent in a referendum among the country's 25 million people in February 1989, dropped the state's commitment to socialism and allowed the formation of rival political parties.

In June 1990, the first impact of that constitution was felt — fundamentalist candidates fared better than any other party in nationwide local elections, the first multi-party balloting ever in Algeria.

In June 1991, street protests orchestrated by the fundamentalists provoked new rioting and scores more deaths, prompting Mr. Benjedid to order the arrest of top FIS leaders and declare a four-month state of siege.

unable to go beyond without seriously prejudicing... public order and national unity.

"In light of this imminent danger, I believe, in my soul and conscience, that the initiatives taken will not now guarantee peace and agreement among the citizens."

"Faced with these serious developments, I have reflected at length on the crisis and possible solutions. The only conclusion I reached was that I cannot continue to exercise my functions without falling short of the sacred oath I made to the nation."

"Aware of my responsibilities at this historic juncture in our country, I feel the only solution to the crisis lies in the necessity for me to leave the political scene."

"This is not an escape from my responsibilities, but it comes from the difficulties... that we are experiencing. This is in the interest of the stability of the country."

"As of today, I renounce my duties as president, and I ask of each and everyone to view this decision as a sacrifice on my part in the highest interest of the nation."

Text of Benjedid's resignation letter

HERE IS the text of Algerian President Chadli Benjedid's resignation speech Saturday night, as translated by the Associated Press:

"In the name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate.

"Dear brothers, dear sisters, citizens.

"You surely know that I did not want to be a candidate for president of the republic after the death of President Houari Boumedienne. I only accepted to be a candidate at the insistence of my comrades, realising that it was a heavy responsibility and a great honour."

"Since then, I filled the post as my conscience and duty dictated. My conviction was that the Algerian people must be given the means to express themselves, as you had already paid a heavy price to arrive on the international scene."

"As soon as conditions permitted, I also put into motion the democratic process necessary to complete the experience of the war of liberation."

"Today we practice a pluralist democracy characterised by numerous milestones in an environment where currents clash. And so, the measures taken and the paths necessary to deal with our problems have today reached a limit that I am

unable to go beyond without seriously prejudicing... public order and national unity.

"In light of this imminent danger, I believe, in my soul and conscience, that the initiatives taken will not now guarantee peace and agreement among the citizens."

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Kurdish leader criticises West

LONDON (R) — Kurdish rebel leader: Massoud Barzani criticised the United Nations and the West on Sunday for what he called indifference to the plight of Iraqi Kurds.

He said the world community risked losing all it had achieved in the Gulf war to end the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait one year ago unless it worked for a political solution that would bring autonomy for Kurds in a democratic Iraq.

"It is high time the world community looked more critically at the situation and worked for a political solution," Mr. Barzani, leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), said in an article in Britain's Observer newspaper.

"If it remains inactive, the accomplishments of the U.N., and of Western allies including Britain, may have been in vain," Mr. Barzani said.

The KDP is one of two main parties in the Iraqi Kurdistan Front, a rebel alliance that has been negotiating with the government since last April to try to



Massoud Barzani

secure an autonomy accord. An economic blockade by Baghdad on Kurdish areas has been in force since Oct. 23, Mr. Barzani said the blockade was a

clear violation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 688, which called for an end to Iraqi "aggression."

Iraqi troops crushed the short-lived Kurdish rebellion after the Gulf war, whose first anniversary falls on Jan. 17. More than one million Kurds fled to Turkey and Iran.

Mr. Barzani said Western countries in the U.S.-led coalition that expelled Iraqi forces from Kuwait had been unprepared for an insurgency inside Iraq and "indifferent to our uprising," while the U.N. was concerned "only with short-term issues."

Residual Western military air cover for Kurds and a U.N. refugee assistance programme are scheduled to end in June.

"We are painfully aware that long-term international protection gives us our only chance of dignified survival. Surely the world community has the means to safeguard the Kurds as well as assist in rehabilitation and development?" Mr. Barzani wrote.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Le Monde Sous Marn de Jacques-Yves Cousteau
19:00 News in French
19:15 Weekly Sports Magazine
19:30 News in Hebrew
19:45 News in Arabic
20:00 Hey Dad
20:15 Capital City
20:30 News in English
20:40 The Elite

PRAYER TIMES

05:10 Fajr
06:32 Sunrise
11:42 Dhuhr
12:28 Asr
16:52 Maghrib
18:14 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedich Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634990
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773261
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751
Assyrian International Church Tel. 683326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be partly cloudy and winds will be northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 3 / 10
Aqaba 6 / 18
Deserts -2 / 12
Jordan Valley 7 / 18
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 10, Aqaba 17. Humidity readings: Amman 40 per cent, Aqaba 45 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Bahjat Badr 849362
Dr. Mohammad Abu Zeid 675480
Dr. Adnan Mansour 893464
Dr. Hanna Mansour 748364
First pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Ansa pharmacy 637055
Nawrokh pharmacy 623672
Al Salim pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 64045
Shamsi pharmacy 637660

ERBID:

Dr. Omar Tadmouni 278525
Al Shams pharmacy 278525

ZARQA:

Dr. Hisham Sharabi 983417
Khalifeh pharmacy 983417

EMERGENCIES

Private sector must take lead in helping Kingdom overcome economic difficulties, minister says

By Maha Addasi

Special to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — The Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce Sunday held its general meeting at the Plaza Hotel at which many ideas were proposed in order to aid Jordan in overcoming its economic difficulties.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade is trying to promote and increase national exports and to encourage investments and develop existing industries, Minister of Industry and Trade Abdullah Ensour said in the opening speech.

The ministry has now prepared a list of projects and ideas for others which would enjoy exemptions and privileges to be established in the industrial cities and the free zones and will offer special privileges for exporters who export 25 per cent of their production, Dr. Ensour said.

The minister also announced that plans have been worked out in cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and the Institute of Public Administration to launch 25 medium-sized investment projects in Jordan and to train investors on means of running their businesses.

The plans worked out in the past month are aimed at promoting national exports, reducing the problem of unemployment and adjusting the deficit in the balance of payments, said the minister. But he warned that the national economy was exposed to and effected by factors beyond its control.

Jordan is still suffering from economic stagnation, Dr. Ensour said.

"But economies in every country grow and often reach a plateau. During the early eighties, economic growth in Jordan reached 10 per cent. In the past three years economic growth has been very modest and was established at 1 per cent growth only," Dr. Ensour said, citing the decline in demand for Jordanian labourers in the Gulf countries and the decrease in exports to these countries as reasons for Jordan's economic situation.

Dr. Ensour explained that the economic stagnation led to higher levels of unemployment and increased Jordan's indebtedness, ultimately leading to the devaluation of the Jordanian dinar because of the increased pressure on the country's reserves of hard currency.

"Accompanying the devaluation of the dinar, Jordan temporarily stopped the importing of certain goods and adopted an economic reform programme," Dr. Ensour said.

"The reform programme showed positive results in the first half of 1990, only to be counteracted by the effects of the Gulf war," he said, adding that although the Gulf war is over, Jordan is still suffering from its effect as the war has created many more challenges for the economy.

Dr. Ensour said that the government is working at improving the economy by finding solutions for the high unemployment level and reducing the budget deficit as well as absorbing Jordanian expatriates so that economic growth in Jordan can be resumed.

"To ensure the success of the new strategy, a great deal of weight falls on the private sector more than on the public sector in that the main role of the government is to provide the environment for investment and production by setting the economic policies to encourage that," Dr. Ensour said.

He added that the Ministry of Industry and Trade has set up a unit, which along with similar units in other Arab and European countries, will introduce producer of spare parts and materials necessary for production.

"The ministry will help increase exports through the Commercial Centre Corporation, finding alternative markets for Jordanian goods," Dr. Ensour said, adding that the ministry has adopted the policy of developing a certain product line from production to exporting.

Federation President Mohammad Asfour addressed the meeting, noting that despite the presence of 7,500 industrial businesses in the Kingdom, the industrial base is still far below the required and aspired level.

In addition, he said, the incentives and measures offered

by the government were not sufficient to stimulate investments, although the government has provided the required infrastructure and ensured political stability.

Investors require other incentives like the presence of skilled workers, minimal customs procedures and speedy acquisition of industrial inputs, Mr. Asfour noted.

Mr. Asfour also criticised the absence of coordination among Arab countries in a bid to confront the world economic blocs and their influence on the world economy. The creation of the European Economic Community and the emergence of a European free trade zone presents a major challenge for the Arab world, said Mr. Asfour.

President of the Amman Chamber of Commerce Haidar Murad noted in a brief speech at the opening of the meeting that the national economy was facing additional challenges in view of the ongoing regional developments which require the implementation of an economic restructuring programme in the Kingdom.

The commercial sector in the country, he said, should shoulder heavy responsibilities under these circumstances to help Jordan overcome the present difficulties.

The meeting later discussed a number of issues pertaining to the functioning of the commercial sector. It also reviewed a report about the general activities of the various chambers in all governorates.

Lower House endorses restrictions on Royal Jordanian; Upper House to take up matter

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Sunday endorsed its Legal Committee's recommendation that the House insist on imposing certain restrictions on the national carrier, Royal Jordanian (RJ), and to again send a related law to the Upper House (Senate) for a second study.

The House endorsement left open the possibility of a joint session of the two chambers of Parliament if the Senate remained firm in its rejection of the Lower House's recommendations, but deputies expressed confidence that the two Houses would work out the differences.

"It is clear that the differences are not that serious," said House Legal Committee Chairman Hussein Mjalli. "We hope we can work this out between us."

The amendments that the

House insists on relate to a 1973 law which gives cargo monopoly to RJ and a 1980 law which gives the airline a free hand to raise loans as it finds necessary without seeking government approval.

"There are other companies which seek to enter the area and therefore RJ cannot hope to have monopoly," said Mr. Mjalli, explaining the House's stand. "Similarly, the national airline cannot have the freedom to obtain loans as it chooses since the ultimate liability will rest with the government since RJ is government owned."

These are the key differences between the two Houses, he explained. The Upper House, in its first reading of the law, ruled against the amendments and sent it back the house last month.

The review of the RJ laws is part of the constitutional process which warrants parliamentary approval for all temporary

laws enacted during either parliamentary recess or suspension of the legislative authority.

The laws related to the airline are among hundreds of laws enacted by the government during the 10-year period between 1974 — when Parliament was suspended — and 1984 when parliamentary life was restored.

The question whether a joint session of the two elected Lower House and the appointed Upper House would be held on the RJ law remained open Sunday. Under the constitution, if the two Houses cannot reach agreement on any legislation, then a joint session has to be held with a collective majority vote as the de facto.

The laws on RJ, with their amendments, go to the Legal Committee of the Senate after which the full Upper House will discuss the issue. If the Senate refuses to endorse the amendments sought by the

Lower House, then a joint session will be held under the chairmanship of the speaker of the Upper House.

During Sunday's House session, Deputy Faris Nabulsi requested that the government brief the House on the findings of an auditing of the RJ accounts by an international auditing firm.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport Ali Suheimat replied that the request be made in writing and then the government would present its reply, also in writing.

The debate on the RJ laws was the focus of the House session Sunday. On other issues, some of the deputies, mostly representing outlying regions, requested the government to assess the damages suffered by farmers and regional infrastructure and services from the recent blizzards and on the needful in addressing the problem.

Crown Prince calls for new approaches to plight of refugees

NEW DELHI, India (J.T.) — New approaches to solving the problems of refugees and the plight of those who were forced to flee during the Gulf crisis and war are vitally needed, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said in a speech here.

In the speech Saturday, read on Prince Hassan's behalf by Mohammad Hamdan, former president of Yarmouk University, the Crown Prince called for new measures to address the continuing problems of the refugees of the recent Gulf war. He also said new mechanisms for dealing with such problems in the future needed to be established.

"The only way to begin such a process is to build extensive, honest and open debates within the international community, involving policy-makers, researchers and relief workers," Prince Hassan said in a speech at the beginning of a conference on population movements, food crisis and community response organised by the Centre for the Study of Administration Relief.

"The role of institutions such as the Centre for the Study of Administration of Relief in this process is crucial, and I take this opportunity to applaud the excellent work which you have done, and to offer you every encouragement for your efforts in the future," Prince Hassan said.

In his speech, the Crown Prince outlined the problems Jordan had and is facing as a result of the displacement of millions of people before, during and after the Gulf war. The displacement of such a large number of people, he

said, "represents one of the largest involuntary demographic movements of recent times, and is possibly the most far-reaching in terms of the number of countries affected."

The displacement of the refugees took place in five main waves, he said. The first occurred soon after the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in August 1990, in which up to one million migrant workers and professionals from Iraq and Kuwait fled the Gulf region.

"The movement into Jordan comprised hundreds of thousands of Egyptian and other Arab workers, as well as some 250,000 Jordanian returnees and Palestinians with Jordanian documents," he said. "It also included hundreds of thousands of migrants from south and southeast Asian countries — principally from India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Philippines — en route to their home countries."

The second wave of displacement, he continued, occurred in the period between the outbreak of the war and the ceasefire, when about 65,000 people left the war zone.

The third wave occurred in the wake of the war and the resulting rebellions in northern and southern Iraq. Up to two million Kurds and Shiites fled towards Turkey and Iran during this period, he said. The fourth wave occurred as these refugees returned to their homes in the aftermath of the put down of the rebellion.

The fifth wave occurred in mid-1991 with a renewed exodus of Jordanians and Palestinians from

Kuwait, largely to Jordan, the Crown Prince said.

Crown Prince Hassan stressed the cost to Jordan of the displacement of these people. "In addition to accommodating these evacuees, Jordan has had to cope with up to 300,000 of its own 'returnees' from Kuwait, Iraq and other Gulf states," he said.

"Although many of these people hold Jordanian documents, most had been abroad for much of their lives," the Crown Prince said adding that their links with and direct experience of Jordan was limited.

Pointing out that a high proportion of these people were born and raised abroad, Crown Prince Hassan criticised the use of the term 'returnees' in reference to them. "The term 'returnees' is a total misnomer in many cases and does not apply to these groups," he said. "Most of those displaced cannot be said to be returning to a homeland that they do not know at all. Their homes, on any reasonable construction of the word, was the place which they were obliged to leave."

Citing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted in 1948, Crown Prince Hassan pointed out that the document does not speak of the right of people to leave or return to their "state," but to their "country."

The Crown Prince went on to outline the current international mechanisms of dealing with the mass displacement of people, saying it was inadequate to cope with situations similar to the Gulf crisis and war. Recent changes,

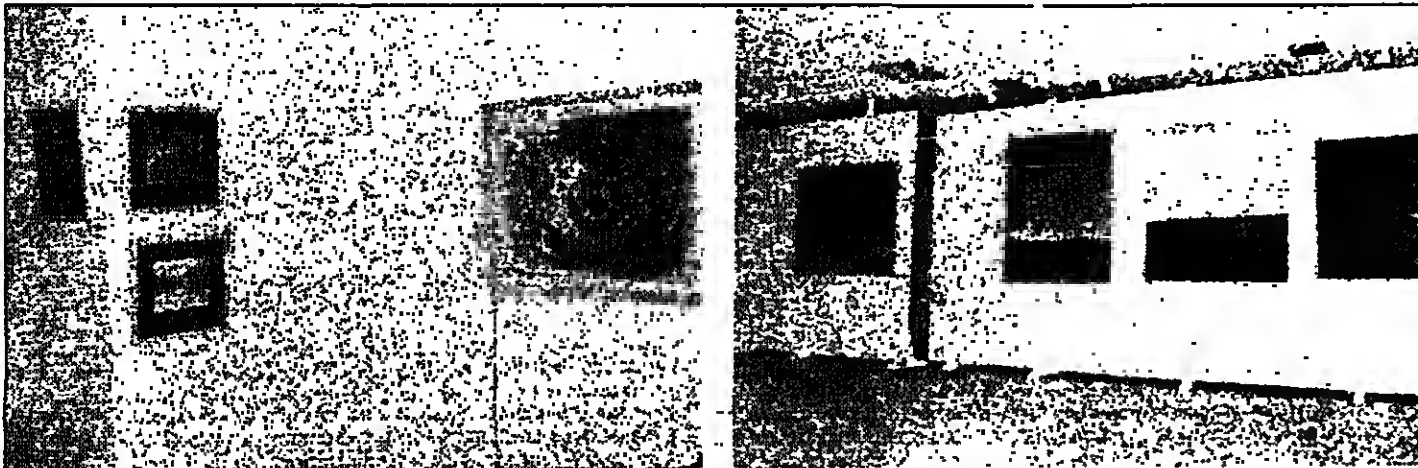
namely the creation of a humanitarian coordinator post at the United Nations which would have a \$50 million fund to deal with such problems, are inadequate and leave many questions in need of answers, he said.

"Is the concentration of such power in one post advisable?" he asked. "What mechanisms of accountability will be built into this post? How will it be determined which situations are deserving of intervention and which are not?"

The Crown Prince also questioned the legality and propriety of establishing "safe havens" within national borders by international agencies. While seeming to be necessary under certain circumstances, "by their nature, humanitarian interventions are seldom taken at face value," he said. "They can easily be regarded as unwarranted interference, or the imposition of alien values, and therefore be dismissed as a new kind of imperialism."

The recent events in the Middle East and the displacement of so many people raise a number of disturbing questions that need to be addressed by the international community, Crown Prince Hassan said.

"It may yet be that the crisis of mass displacement in the Middle East will provide the impetus towards improvement," he said. "If that be the case, then we may look back on the days of crisis and congratulate ourselves not only on surviving their dangers, but upon making compassionate and effective use of their opportunities."



Paintings by Princess Wijdan Ali (left) and Franco de Courten, Italy's ambassador to Jordan, are now on display at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery

ART REVIEW

Exhibition provides tour of sensations

By Ica Wahbeh

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Like always in good taste, the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery is hosting yet another abstract art exhibition. The canvases on display are those of Princess Wijdan Ali and of Italy's ambassador to Jordan Franco de Courten.

The overwhelming feeling when stepping in the spacious display room is that of warmth, of lazy desert days, atemporal, suspended, peaceful. But this feeling will last for only as long as the eyes stay riveted to the paintings in this room. In the room to the right, the serenity is replaced by tumultuous feelings and rioting sensations, the eyes are hit by a whirlpool of colours, passionate, tearing.

To explain what prompted the passion that emanates from the canvases, a gripping piece of prose simply signed "Wijdan" says:

"Why Karbala?" Because Karbala was and continues to be the epitome of human tragedy in the history of

Muslims and Arabs.

Each era had a Karbala. Each place buried a Karbala. Each person cried a Karbala. Karbala is the symbol of betrayal and the beginning of factionalism and defeat. Yesterday's Karbala is today's and tomorrow's. I chose Karbala (as) a subject for my art because I saw a hundred past Karbala's and fear a thousand to come."

The paintings invariably represent letters of the Arabic alphabet, mainly curved, taking the centre part of the canvas, with colours splashed around in turbulent strokes of brush, giving the impression of a hot desert storm. The letters are in contrasting colours to the predominantly green and intense orange background. Calligraphy is omnipresent, the paintings take you in a dazzling world of stormy passion.

Equally dazed by synthesised impressions of light and colour, translated into abstractions, one passes into a calmer world, that of Franco de Courten's canvases.

ten's canvases.

Perhaps better than anyone, his paintings, in mixed media, recapture the colours and landscape of Jordan with the flaming red, gold and light ochre of the desert, the brownish yellow and grey of the stones and the infinite gradations of the green of the vegetation.

In the group of paintings titled "Landscape" (paesaggio), like in almost all his other canvases, the artist is using the collage technique to skilfully create an image.

Old-looking manuscripts have square bits of coloured paper superimposed to create the landscape.

The ubiquitous manuscripts, together with paper clips, form the group of paintings called "Composition." At times, an arch or a dome, at others whole buildings (Dome of the Rock, Church of the Nativity), winding narrow streets and vaulted gateways in Jerusalem evoke Palestine.

In "Letters from Jordan," the manuscripts constitute the background while the bits of collage paper (in dark orange

or brick brown) seem to make up blocks of solid stone, precariously balanced, "as if in a child's cube construction defying laws of nature and physics."

Four monumental-size pictures, mixed media on wood, break away from the collage technique to represent, through bold dots and stripes, landscapes typical of the four seasons. The summer is hot — with bright orange abundant —, the autumn seems toem and fertile, winter is hinting of the promise of the spring to come.

One last group of paintings draws its motive from the prevailing desert. The "Desert Road," a dark grey band of asphalt, crosses the infinite sand in a succession of canvases with varying colour and landscapes that create a feeling of movement, passage through time and space.

The warm sensations seem to create an ideal model of abstract purity. The works will be on display until Jan. 28.

Sudanese delegation visits PSD

AMMAN (Petra) — Public Security Department Director Maj. Gen. Fadel Ali Fuhaid Sunday received a visiting Sudanese police delegation led by Maj. Gen. Hassan Ahmad Siddiq. Maj. Gen. Fuhaid praised Jordanian-Sudanese relations, particularly in the public security field. The delegation visited the various PSD sections, including the planning and organisation, studies, criminal investigations, control and command, and were briefed on the functions of these departments.

A STEP UP — Safwan Bataineh, a former commander of the Jordan Times, has been re-appointed economic adviser to the prime minister.

A graduate from Columbia University, Mr. Bataineh had held the same post between 1988 and 1990 and had worked earlier as an associate and vice-president for several U.S. investment banks.



Inter-Continental names new general manager

AMMAN (J.T.) — Chawki Ayoub, who has over 30 years of experience in the hotel business, has been named the new general manager at the Hotel Inter-Continental Jordan, according to a hotel statement Sunday.

Mr. Ayoub, who graduated from a five-year programme at the Beirut Hotel School, began his career at the Phoenicia Inter-Continental Hotel in Beirut when it was opened in 1962, according to the statement.

Mr. Ayoub worked in the Food and Beverage and the Banqueting departments until the outbreak of Lebanon's civil war in 1976, when he was transferred to the Inter-Continental Rivadi in Saudi Arabia. In 1985, he became general manager of the Jeddah Conference Palace.



Chawki Ayoub

Prior to transferring to the Hotel Inter-Continental Jordan in December 1991, Mr. Ayoub was general manager at the Hotel Inter-Continental Al Ain in the United Arab Emirates, according to the statement.

Children to be treated in U.S.

AMMAN (Petra) — Al Hussein Society for the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped will send three disabled children to the United States for treatment and rehabilitation, according to Her Royal Highness Princess Maja Raad, the society president.

The Princess voiced happiness for this opportunity to treat the handicapped children abroad and lauded the efforts made by some parties to shoulder the travel and treatment costs.

The society's physiotherapist, Saleh Al Arabi, who will accompany the kids, said the children

need treatment from the complications caused by polio and expressed hope that these children will be able to lead a normal life.

The children and their families expressed their appreciation and gratitude to His Royal Highness Princess Raad Ben Zeid, the chief chamberlain, and to Princess Maja as well as those who contributed to this humanitarian effort.

The three children suffer from crippling polio effects which cannot be treated in Jordan.

Exhibition features cultural, social development in Irbid

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Sunday opened an exhibition displaying the achievements of the Irbid municipality, which featured different cultural, social and developmental aspects of the northern city between 1979 and 1991.

The exhibition, held at the Royal Cultural Centre in Amman, displays maps, posters and other items that present a general picture of the development of Irbid over the past 22 years.

Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Razzak Tbeishat, a former mayor of Irbid, said in a statement that plans carried out by the municipality entailed the creation of 25 public gardens with public libraries and children's playgrounds.

The services of the Irbid municipality benefited areas around the city covering towns and vil-

lages, he said.

The Irbid municipality is currently working on a set of regulations designed to preserve the old style buildings in Irbid, similar to a practice followed in Salt, Dr. Tbeishat noted.

The minister announced that the old prison in Irbid built under Ottoman rule will be transformed into a cultural centre to be run by the Department of Antiquities. Jamil Momani, head of the Irbid Municipal Council, was quoted as saying that the exhibition displays designs of a number of major projects in Irbid, including the new municipal complex that includes a building, car park, public gardens and libraries.

In addition, he said, a design for the Hashemite garden will also be displayed among other items together with a booklet covering the main features of the municipality's achievements.

Society reiterates strong ties between Jordanians, Germans

BONN (Petra) — The Jordanian-German Friendship Society Saturday held its annual celebration in the presence of Jordanian Ambassador to Germany, Khalid Madadha, several German personalities and members of the Jordanian community in Germany.

The celebration was opened with the society's traditional song, which expresses the friendship between the Jordanian and German peoples. The celebration hall was bedecked with photos of His Majesty King Hussein and Jordanian and German flags.

The chairman of the society delivered an address in which he emphasised the positive role of the society, which was established in 1963, in promoting relations between the two peoples and familiarising the German people with Jordan and its civilisation.

Mr. Madadha also delivered an address in which he thanked the chairman and members of the society for their efforts in bolster-

ing Jordanian-German relations.

Addressing the ceremony also was Odou Steinback, director of the Oriental Studies Institute in Hamburg. Dr. Steinback lauded the democratisation process in Jordan and commended King Hussein's stands and efforts in serve world peace.

He called on the European Community (EC) to contribute effectively to solving the Middle East problems.

At the ceremony, lottery tickets were sold to the audience. The proceeds of the lottery will benefit Palestinians living in refugee camps in Jordan.

In remarks to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, at the ceremony, Mr. Madadha described the Jordanian-German relations as historical. "These relations were always distinguished for cooperation and understanding," he said.

"Jordan has always benefited from German assistance which was extended to it in the form of easy-term loans, grants, training courses and in-kind assistance."

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Overburdened system

PRIME MINISTER Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker deserves all the praise and support for the effort he initiated yesterday to reform the country's administrative body. The task, as he rightly put it, is urgent. In his speech to the Civil Service Council Sunday, the prime minister pinpointed the ills that plague Jordanian civil service and laid down a comprehensive plan for its reform. As Sharif Zeid pointed out, this overhaul process, vital to any country's development, has long been overdue. Yet it was so comforting to hear the prime minister assert that he would follow-up on the process and its progress. Also reassuring is the premier's call on the Civil Service Council to enlist the services of the universities and public institutes to participate in the process and his advice to involve the media and the public at large in the debate over the reforms.

The task, however, is awesome. Over the years the civil service has got inflated and overregulated. Even more, civil servants, as is the case in all countries, have extended and overstretched their domain to all aspects of people's lives.

It is a fact that the average Jordanian citizen was much more independent 20 or 30 years ago. The civil service, with the laws and regulations governing its functions, has almost stripped people of all their independence to handle their affairs by themselves and placed them in the hands of government and its so many and sprawling ministries, authorities and departments. Two of the most important points in the prime minister's address were his call for the review of laws and regulations and for decentralisation. These two very important aspects of the reform process need to be emphasised and reemphasised more often. The concept of the government as the provider, the decider, the executor, has become so ingrained in people's psyche to the extent that it has paralysed their initiative and will. The role of the individual, the community, the village, the town as autonomous units must be regained. Last week's snowstorm has shown that dependence on the central government and its central authorities only aggravates problems, whether natural or man-made. His Majesty the King clearly pointed to this in the cabinet meeting.

Saturday when he called on citizens to shoulder their responsibility and cooperate to run their affairs, especially in times of crisis. We are heartened to see this long-sought process starting at last. We strongly believe that the government deserves all the support Jordanians can extend to it to succeed in this issue. While we salute the prime minister for his move, we wish him and his team the best of luck.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily launched a very strong and bitter attack on the U.S. administration for its continued stand with regard to the sanctions imposed on Iraq and for what, it said, were lies designed to pave the ground for the U.S.-led aggression on Iraq a year ago. In his meeting with Tareq Aziz, the U.S. secretary of state realised that Iraq wanted to settle the question peacefully but preferred to pursue the course of falsehoods backed by an American media controlled by the U.S. administration, full of groundless reports about the situation in the Gulf, said the paper. The U.S. administration had poisoned the minds of the American public with lies and false information about the situation in the Gulf region and fabricated stories to deceive the American people, the paper continued. It said that President Bush was keen on using the false reports about the situation in the Gulf as a means to mobilise the American public against Iraq and its leadership, thus paving the ground for the aggression. Furthermore, Mr. Bush, Mr. Baker and many other U.S. officials had made clear their desire to see the Iraqi people massacred and Iraqi infrastructure destroyed, long before the aggression was launched, said the paper. By underlining these facts one week before the first anniversary of the war, the paper said it wanted to clearly point out to the most dangerous men in the world who are bent to cause destruction and bring conflict to the nations of the world. The paper said that by pursuing the course of deceit, double standards and aggression, the U.S. administration is proving that it can never win the credibility as a custodian of world's stability and security.

As the Israeli and Arab delegations to the Middle East peace talks prepare for the new round of negotiations in Washington, one can only expect Israeli leaders to embark on fresh measures and malpractices in the occupied Arab territories to abort the peace plans, said a columnist in Swat Al Shaab daily Sunday. In Washington, the Israeli delegation is expected to raise procedural questions insisting on Israel's demand to talk to the Palestinians and Jordanians jointly, thus placing another obstacle in the path of the peace negotiations, said Salameh Ekour. The writer said that Israel is interested in procedural matters as it is afraid to delve into matters of substance which demand its withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands. It is keen on stalling for time, awaiting for the multilateral talks, to begin in Moscow, which, Israel hopes, would be in its favour. The writer said that through the Moscow meeting, Israel is hoping to settle questions related to water, armament, security, oil and refugees and to establish economic and cultural ties with the Arabs, without having to solve the basic issue of withdrawing from the occupied territories. He said that the Arab negotiators should by no means end the bilateral talks in Washington unless Israel is made to heed the will of the world community and accept to withdraw its forces from the occupied Arab lands.

Weekly Political Pulse

Two issues different reasons

ISRAEL is expected to lump the issue of Palestinians' right to return or to compensation with the subject of Jewish emigrants from Arab countries in the multilateral peace talks scheduled to kick off in late January. On the surface, this "mixing up" of these two legally separate matters appears to be benign or fair. Yet, at closer scrutiny, the subject of Jewish emigrants from Arab lands is legally and politically distinguishable from the exodus of Palestinians from their homeland. From a strictly juristic perspective, the rights of the Palestinians forced to leave their country to their properties or compensation for them, in addition to their right to return, cannot by any stretch of imagination be associated with "similar" rights related to Jews from Arab countries who emigrated or left their ancestral homes in several Arab states. The reason is simple and clear: we are dealing here with sovereign Arab states and the rights of whatever nature or compensations ensuing therefrom to the Jews who left their countries of origin cannot prejudice or affect in any form whatsoever the rights of the Palestinian people as such. Morocco, Syria, Egypt or any other Arab country from which Jews had left may have incurred separate liabilities vis-a-vis such Jews, but such separate legal and political obligations are not and cannot be linked to the rights of

the Palestinian people that ensued from their exodus from Palestine.

The advocates of the proposition to treat the affected Arab countries plus the Palestinian people as one legal and political party for the purpose of trading one set of rights belonging to the concerned Jews for the rights of the Palestinians are therefore either novice in legal matters or too simplistic in their approach. Had there been some kind of a clearing house for such matters in which Israel, the concerned Arab states and the international community would have pitched in their financial resources, then and only then some kind of trading could have taken place for such an overall objective. Otherwise, the Jews of Morocco will have to make their claims to the Moroccan government for any right they believe it is owing them. The same goes for the Jews of Egypt or any other Jews from Arab countries who would like to stake out a claim for property on compensation. Such claims are patently, different from the rights of Palestinians to their properties which can be addressed only to Israel.

On the political rights level, again the rights of the Palestinians are fundamentally different from the rights of Jews who left

various Arab states. For one thing, such Jews have never demanded their repatriation to their Arab homelands. Had they done so, I believe they would have been granted this right. By contrast, the Palestinians are not only demanding, they insist on their right to return to their ancestral homeland. Moreover, the root causes behind the Palestinian exodus are drastically different from those associated with the departure of Jews from various Arab countries. Besides, the volume and implications of the Palestinian forced departure is also greater since they had once constituted the majority of the people in Palestine before most of it was turned into the state of Israel, whereas the Jews in Arab countries were never more than a minority in their respective Arab homelands.

To sum things up, juxtaposing the rights of Palestinians and the rights of Jews from different Arab countries is untenable legally and politically and cannot be addressed as if they were one and the same thing. It would be prudent to keep such distinction in mind when the multilateral talks are launched in the near future. Otherwise, the parties would plunge into a quagmire from which they may not extricate themselves with immunity.

By Waleed Sadi

Abroad she embodies Palestine; at home she's controversial

By Marcus Eliason

The Associated Press

RAMALLAH, OCCUPIED

WEST BANK — As darkness fell

and Israeli loudspeakers warned

of the curfew, Hanan Ashrawi

10-year-old daughter burst into

the living room, close to tears.

She had just heard the peace

talks were back on track. That

was good news for the Middle

East, of course, but for Zeina it

meant her mother would soon be

off to Washington for another

indefinite spell away from home.

Hanan Ashrawi's calm, articulate

style makes her an ideal

spokeswoman for the Palestinian

negotiating team, but there is a

price beyond a disrupted family

life. Having played a prominent

role in bringing Israelis and

Palestinians to the table, she must

now wend her way between

bazaardoz extremes.

Hard-line Israelis see her as a

mouthpiece for their archenemy,

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat,

and would love to put her behind

bars.

Hard-line Palestinians see the

U.S.-brokered peace process as a

betrayal of their cause and Mrs.

Ashrawi as an upper-class, westernised

matron far removed from the

daily battle against Israeli occupation.

Neither side can deny, however,

that in the propaganda war

being waged for Western opinion,

the measured, unflappable

Ashrawi style is a more effective

weapon than Mr. Arafat's finger-

wagging rhetoric.

The commitment of moderates

like Mrs. Ashrawi, 45, was severely

tested this past week after

Israel ordered the expulsion of 12

Palestinians for alleged subver-

sion. The unusually harsh measure,

provoked by lethal attacks on

Israelis, put pressure on the

Palestinian team to pull out of the

peace talks altogether.

Mrs. Ashrawi kept her suitcases

packed. She firmly rebuffed the

suggestion that the peace

process was dead, met publicly

with the wives of some of the men

facing expulsion and reacted with

dignified calm to their anguished

reproaches, even when one ex-

claimed: "Hanan Ashrawi, you

do not represent us."

On Tuesday, after the U.N.

Security Council denounced

Israel, the PLO decided to let the

talks go ahead. Next morning,

she would board a bus with the

Palestinian negotiating team and

set off for neighbouring Jordan to

catch a flight to Washington.

The telephone rang incessantly

in the Ashrawi house. Aides,

bodyguards and family bustled

about. The family cat ambled in

looking for a warm spot. Zeina

watched cartoons on TV. Mrs.

Ashrawi's husband, Emile, a soft-

spoken, bushy-bearded photo-

grapher, asked who wanted

coffee.

Sitting on a couch in the living

room, Mrs. Ashrawi radiated

quiet self-assurance. She is a pro-

fessor of English literature, and it

shows in her elegant English as

well as her orderly exposition of

the Palestinian cause.

She began a sentence in En-

glish, switched to Arabic for a

phone call from Washington,

then back to English to complete

the sentence.

Another call, from a U.S. radio

station. No, she can't confirm the

talks are going ahead, she said.

The announcement must come from

the Palestine Liberation Organi-

sation.

Mrs. Ashrawi is careful not to

appear to be calling the shots

ahead of Mr. Arafat, who en-

trusted her with the task of speak-

ing for the Palestinian negotiating

team.

Her media stardom is of recent

origin, but her involvement in

politics began in 1967, when she

was at college in Beirut and the

Arab-Israeli war resulted in

Israeli occupation of the West

Bank.

"Suddenly my family was in

jeopardy and I couldn't go

home," she said. "Ramallah was

under occupation. My house was

shelled. For days I didn't know

whether my parents were alive or

dead. All I knew was, it's my

problem now, I have to find a

way of going home."

It took six years to win Israeli

permission to come home. She

taught literature at Bir Zeit Uni-

versity near Ramallah, married

Emile, had two daughters and fell

in with like-minded Palestinian

intellectuals who were evolving

away from the old all-or-nothing

approach that denied Israel's

right to exist.

Meanwhile, Israelis sympathetic

to the Palestinian cause were

hearing more and more about a

straight-talking woman from

Ramallah who was willing to

meet them and debate, and to call

openly for an independent

Palestinian state in the West

Bank and Gaza Strip, coexisting

with Israel.

It was a way to get beyond the

gun-toting terrorist stereotype

and "make Israelis see us as

human beings," as Mrs.

Ashrawi put it.

In 1988, when Arafat finally

endorsed the two-state solution,

it was time for people like Mrs.

Ashrawi to assume a leadership

role.

Throughout last year, she met

regularly with U.S. Secretary of

State James Baker to set up the

peace talks. The living room of

her large, two-story house in

Ramallah, 13 kilometres north of

Jerusalem, has welcomed an

array of Western dignitaries.

The Israeli government doesn't

talk to Mrs. Ashrawi, but so far

has resisted pressure from hard-

liners to put her on trial for

contact with the PLO.

"I have no problem sitting

down with anyone," she said.

Of Israelis who refuse to talk to

her, she remarked: "The tables

have turned. I remember the bad

old days when we were on the

defensive and we didn't talk to

Israelis. Now they're on the de-

fensive and they don't talk to

us."

Israeli peace groups relish talk-

ing to her, and she frequently

debates with them in public.

Lately, she has had to cancel

some of these appearances.

Ramallah is under curfew after an

Israeli was killed near the town,

and if she wants to spend the

night with her family, she has to

be home by dark.

LETTERS

Facts about
'facts on Yugoslavia'

To the Editor:

The letter that appeared in the Dec. 12-13 issue of the Jordan Times under the title "Facts on Yugoslavia" elegantly shifts the responsibility for the war from Serbia to Slovenia and Croatia, without even mentioning the war. Serbia was portrayed as "highly democratic, human, peaceful and devoted to the international law." However, for the sake of truth new facts about Yugoslavia have to be revealed.

Jordanians must not be misled and misinformed by the Serbian propaganda.

After the crumbling of the communist regime in Yugoslavia, free elections were held in all Yugoslav republics and new republic governments were elected under international supervision. The previous Yugoslav federation was completely dominated and exploited by Serbs and Serbian interest through the communist party, army, monetary policies, diplomacy, police, intelligence service, economical policies. With the newly elected governments, Serbs lost their dominant ruling position, their privileges and benefits in Yugoslavia and especially in the republic of Croatia. Then, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro (four out of six republics, thus a majority of the population) had proposed and supported the idea of so called "loose confederation of Yugoslav republics." Serbia rejected such an idea. Clearly, the only way to regain its previous power and exploitation of other nations in Yugoslavia was to try by force. Serbia inflamed many incidents, started rallies against other republics, confiscated properties of other republics, raided \$2 billion from the Yugoslav monetary fund. Even then Slovenia and Croatia proposed peaceful separation, through negotiations and mutual agreements, no matter how long and how complicated the negotiations would be, accepting also international mediation, and, of course, the international law.

Instead of accepting the negotiations, Serbia started the war in August 1990, followed later by the so-called Yugoslav National Army (fighting on Serbian side for Serbian interests) and called finally Serbian reservists and the legalised Nazi groups to make the final touch on massacres of Croatian civilians. The result is known to the whole world as the fate of the towns of Vukovar and Dubrovnik; 10,000 dead on the Croatian side and 15,000 crippled, without knowing how many victims are on Serbian side, destruction of dozens of factories, 200 churches, hospitals and thousands of private homes. Even kindergartens were the target of military shelling. Massacres, slaughters and genocide of Croatian people could be seen on TV screens all over the world. A third of Croatia became occupied territory, in a much worse sense than Gaza and West Bank. Croats were expelled from their homes. These facts were not even mentioned in the aforesaid article, as if they simply did not exist.

Why did not Serbia negotiate? Why did it start the war? Simply because Serbian rulers had committed themselves, long time ago, to establishing either "a new, harder Serbian controlled federation" or "a great Serbia" taking parts of other republics that will encircle Serbia as the "new power in the Balkan."

But some other well-known facts were also "forgotten":

— The war is on Croatian territory, and it continues. Only Serbia can stop it, because Croatia is defending its territory and people.

— There are considerable Muslim and Albanian minorities in Serbia, both completely deprived of their basic human rights in "this democratic state." Both have been prevented by force to elect their representatives, to have basic political, ethnic and human rights. Out of nearly 500 mosques built during the Turkish empire all around Serbia, not a single one has been preserved even as a cultural and historical monument. At the same time, in Croatia's capital Zagreb, a new Islamic centre, the biggest in Europe, has been built a few years ago.

— Serbia is trying by all means to get close to the Jewish lobby in the U.S. to exploit their influence in U.S. Serbian was lately very eager to open diplomatic relations with Israel despite its role in the Non-Aligned Movement and earlier commitment to Arab friends. They tried (successfully) to capitalise on antagonism against Muslims in Serbia.

All foreign and Amnesty International reports are full of claims of violations of basic human rights in Serbia and its ally Montenegro.

— More than 10,000 deserters from the Serbian-lead Yugoslav army have been put to trial in Serbia. The young Serbian people obviously see the real facts, but the force of the rulers in breaking them down.

It is a hard time for the courageous and proud Serbian people who has been so recklessly misled, bluffed and misused. The latest developments show growing protests and peace movements by Serbs and Montenegrans to stop the devastating and inhuman war that is bound to lead to total annihilation.

Name withheld upon request.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Walking on two legs

The following article is a news feature released by the United Nations Children's Fund

AS the 20th century comes to an end, monopoly state control of economic life is an idea whose time has gone — discredited among the millions of people whose hopes it raised but whose needs it failed to meet.

The evidence of that failure is scattered not only over Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union but over even larger areas of the developing world.

Free-market economies, although facing many serious problems of their own, have generally shown themselves to be more successful in raising the living standards of the majority.

In this climate of self-satisfaction among free marketeers, UNICEF's 1992 State of the World's Children report tries to regain perspective by stressing the other half of the development consensus now emerging. "Market-friendly economic policies do not mean that governments can leave development to the market-place," says the report. "It is the responsibility of government, among other things, to ensure basic investments in people — in nutrition, health care, clean water, safe sanitation, family planning services, and education."

The report cites the economic

success stories of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan to show that expenditure on such services as education and health are "not just social expenditures but economic investments, not just indulgences which can only be afforded after countries have become prosperous but the foundations without which widespread prosperity will not be achieved."

In other words, concludes UNICEF, development proceeds most steadily when it walks on the two legs of a market-friendly economic policy and a government commitment to ensuring investment in people.

Skewed spending

Administrative reform

(Continued from page 1)

period of time and a fixed timetable.

The prime minister said that the Upper House of Parliament has voiced its willingness to fully cooperate with the government and the Lower House towards carrying out reforms while the Lower House stressed that it will help the government to introduce changes that would ensure simplified procedures and routine to address the points of weakness and define responsibility of various departments.

Based on these concepts and ideas, the prime minister said "I hope that the message is clear to all departments and their staff" that the government is very serious to carry out reform in the country's public administration system.

"This time I will take personal responsibility in following up procedures in the reform and report to the nation about progress or failure," the prime minister said. The prime minister said the government plans to take into account the various reports, studies and research conducted in this respect which pointed to a serious imbalance in the administrative system, summed up in the following points:

- Lack of an integrated plan to coordinate work among the various government departments including the Civil Service Commission, the Audit Bureau and the Institute of Public Administration;

- Adhering to old and obsolete procedures that cannot cater to the needs of the socio-economic development process;
- Holding on to routine that continues to delay the accomplishment of important government business;

- Absence of an integrated plan for the development of human resources and lack of a national plan for training government employees to offer a better performance;

- Scarce statistical information and ill-planned decisions;
- Poor sense of responsibility on the part of the employees due to lack of incentives;
- Lack of plans to dispose of centralisation and failure to take steps to encourage decentralised decision, in the provinces;

- Failure on the part of the administration system to cope with the fast growth in government business.

The prime minister said that the following procedures are to be followed to deal with the weaknesses:

- Clear definition of the overall administration development plan;
- Developing human resources which means training, and encouraging competitiveness;

- Setting up organisational plans help government departments to interact;
- Developing the methods and techniques of government business;
- Introducing a system for planning, executing and following up the implementation of development schemes;

- Developing local administration in the provinces with a view to encouraging decentralisation;
- Giving due attention to modern technology and its utilisation as best as possible;
- Creating incentives for employees to offer a better performance.

"Time should not be wasted in carrying out the required reform and I expect from the council to supply me with a fixed timetable for implementing the required reforms and the methods to be adopted in this regard," the prime minister said.

"You should give due attention to the need for simplifying procedures adopted at government departments, specially matters directly affecting the public and I

expect an executive plan to be finalised within three months," he said.

Sharif Zeid encouraged the council to present him with defined ideas which can be utilised by the government to cater to the needs of the environment and public health and ideas about stimulating financial and economic activities and investments in the country.

He said that an independent body should be set up to carry out inspection of government departments to monitor their performance and the behaviour of their personnel in line with the provisions contained in the National Charter and in accordance with the requirements of public interest.

"I believe that the reform programme should be a national effort. Therefore it should involve various organisations including universities and research centres," he said. The public reform should be a continuous process and acceptable to the public opinion in a society which enjoys democracy, he added.

Following the prime minister's speech, the council held a session under Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Thounan Al Hindawi during which it reviewed the prime minister's directives.

The council decided to set up a four-member committee to work out recommendations to be discussed by the council, taking into account the prime minister's directives and aimed at speeding up the process of administrative reform.

The council scheduled another meeting for next Sunday to follow up the work on this plan.

The Civil Service Council groups ministers of planning, labour, finance and higher education, Civil Service Commission president, the legal advisor at the Prime Ministry, and the director of the Institute of Public Administration. It also includes the director general of the Arab Potash Company, representing the private sector.

A poetic journey to the East

The French poet Arthur Rimbaud, who died 100 years ago, exerted an enormous influence over subsequent generations of poets. Born in 1854, he started writing verse at the age of 14. He moved to Paris in 1871, where he wrote his most celebrated poem, "Le Bateau Ivre." In 1873 Rimbaud wrote another seminal text, "Une Saison en Enfer." From 1875 until his death, Rimbaud lived the life of an adventurer, joining the army in the Netherlands, travelling round Europe with a circus, and then becoming an explorer and gun-runner in Ethiopia and Somalia. The occasion of the centenary of Rimbaud's death has seen the publication of an important new edition of his works, "L'Oeuvre-Vie d'Arthur Rimbaud." Last month, a French delegation, including Foreign Minister Roland Dumas and Culture Minister Jack Lang, travelled to Aden, where Rimbaud lived for a time, to inaugurate the Maison Rimbaud, a Franco-Yemeni cultural and poetic centre.

Jean-Pierre Péroncel Hugoz

ADEN — "Have all these people come to see us?" exclaimed Jack Lang's wife, Monique, as the French delegation arrived to inaugurate the Maison Rimbaud in the former headquarters of Barday, the company which employed Arthur Rimbaud during his time in Aden and Ethiopia (then Abyssinia) from 1880 to 1891.

Sadly, the noisy crows perched on the roofs of nearby buildings whom the culture minister's wife had spotted were not there to greet the French VIPs; the Maison Rimbaud happens to be located next to a football stadium, where a vital match between Yemen and Bahrain was being played that day.

To cap everything, the name Rimbaud is transcribed and pronounced in Arabic exactly like Rambo, and certain inhabitants of Aden who had glanced only cursorily at their newspapers were labouring under the impression that a centre was being opened in honour of one of the American cinema's most debatable folk heroes.

The cheering that greeted Yemen's first goal drowned the voices of ministers and poets alike, even though they had been closeted in an airless room to deliver their speeches and recite their verses.

It would have been much nicer if the ceremony had been held in the much airier surroundings of the terrace from which Rimbaud must have contemplated Aden's ancient white minaret, the violet lines of the Red Sea and the dark ridges of the extinct volcano crater in which the city is built.

It is notorious that Rimbaud did not have a good thing to say in his letters about that "awful hole, Aden," where "the walls of the crater prevent air from entering," where there is "not a single leaf," "not a drop of fresh water, where the heat is 'excessive'."

In other words, poor Arthur went through "a real nightmare" while he was living there, "without newspapers or a library," living, among "local Bedouins."

But after much searching the Rimbaud experts managed to come up with a phrase or two which they thought might make up for those damning comments: "If I were very ill, I would go down to Aden, which is a civilised place" (letter from Abyssinia, Jan. 10, 1889). Two years later, and nine months before his death in Marseilles, he wrote "Aden's hot climate would do me good" (Feb. 20, 1891).



Arthur Rimbaud

In the course of the inauguration by the French ministers, we were shown, in the splendid arcade room on the ground floor of the Barday building, an exhibition of most of the works in French by Rimbaud or about him that are currently in print.

The most amazing thing about the whole operation was that it had not occurred to the Rimbaud aficionados who had organised the Aden trip — undoubtedly an original idea in itself — to give the Yemeni public a chance to see the far from negligible corpus of Rimbaud's works in Arabic translation. They were put on show earlier this year at a nice little exhibition organised by the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris.

There were plenty of works they could have chosen from: "Une Saison en Enfer" translated by the Egyptian Ramses Yunan, Pierre Gascar's "Rimbaud et la Commune" translated by the Syrian Abdelbari Ayun Al Soud, and the Lebanese Chabrel Dagher's translation of the Adept letters. It would have been doubly welcome to see these works on display, since the main bookshop in Aden has no book on or by Rimbaud in Arabic.

Were there official fears that Yemeni visitors might be

offended by the nasty things Rimbaud had to say about Aden? It is more likely that the culprit was a certain brand of French offhandedness. It seems the mistake will be put right, but the unfortunate impression created on the first day of the exhibition will not be forgotten.

Imagine how the French would have reacted if the Arabs had organised an exhibition in Paris devoted to an Arab writer who had lived in France, without having the tact to display some of his

works in French translation? In the end, it was probably a fortunate coincidence that the kind of young people the Maison Rimbaud hopes, in theory, to attract were focusing their attention on a football match.

There was no reason why they should not have turned up at the exhibition because, even when illiterate (and this remark holds for the whole of the modern Arab World), they often show a genuine interest in — and sometimes a startling gift for — the art of poetry, whose roots in the Arab community go back to the pre-Islamic period.

On the evening of the official opening, the paneload of Rimbaud fans gave a Franco-Arabic poetry reading. One might have expected it to be held in the Maison Rimbaud, which is located in the centre of town, but it was organised in the suburbs, in Aden's largest luxury hotel, amidst a welter of potted plants, officials and spotlights.

The young football fans were left out of the jamboree and had to fall back on the Queen of Sheba open-air cinema, which was showing the American movie, "Beverly Hills Cop," with Arabic subtitles and Eddie Murphy dubbed into French. — Le Monde.

New look on the road

By Heidi Munan

BIEL, SWITZERLAND — While large car manufacturers are busy making plans for non-polluting vehicles to comply with regulations set for the next century, the small inventor is also leaving his mark.

Could the car of the 21st century look like the flat multicoloured fish which hurtled silently across the sun-drenched Australian desert on bicycle wheels? The field is still wide open, admits Prof. Juan Graells, assistant professor at the Engineering School of Biel, Switzerland, whose team gave birth to the Spirit of Biel, a kilogramme vehicle that won the 1990 World Solar Challenge. Held every three years, the race is run between Darwin and Adelaide. "We started among a field of 36 fine craft, many built by the world's foremost auto makers," Graells noted. "Honda raced us a close second — they averaged 54 kilometres per hour to the Spirit's 65 kilometres — Michigan University and Hoxan of Japan both achieved 52 kilometres. And this wasn't the last solar challenge."

Neither was it the first. The Engineering School of Biel offers a course in automobile technology; its direct involvement in electric vehicles started with the oil crises of the 1970s. Solar energy experimentation was the logical next step. In 1987, the school was ready to enter the first Spirit of Biel in the World Solar challenge. This race follows the desolate 3,000 kilometres of Stuart Highway, from Darwin on the north coast of Australia to Adelaide on the south. The first Spirit was of a different design from the present one; the solar panel on the roof was adjustable to catch the sun at different angles.

As it turned out, the adjustable panel caught more than the sun. Strong draughts from a "road train," as the heavy trailer trucks are called in Australia, could blow the vehicle right across the road. The panel also acted like a sail to the turbulent winds that race across the Australian desert.

Three years and hundreds of man-hours later, Spirit of Biel II was ready for the track. Her light, low carbon-fiber body achieved a drag coefficient of only 0.11 during experiments; on the road it's 0.13 — exceptional for a vehicle of her size. Her solar cells are 17 per cent efficient, an improvement on the standard 11-13 per cent; they drive a generator capable of 1,300 W output. She moved ahead on the first day of the race, and kept her position until she crossed the finish line, five days and 3,007 kilometre later.

But the Spirit of Biel can better its racing average. A journalist with an instinct for headlines drove her through a police speed check at 88 kilometres per hour on a Swiss highway and got the first ever solar speeding ticket — one for the Guinness Book of Records? Under the bright Australian sun, the Spirit achieved a maximum speed 110 kilometres per hour. "She left the field behind soon after the 8 a.m. start on the first day," recalled Dr. Graells. "Of course she was escorted; there were 15 of us in the team, five students and nine staff. An official observer enforced the rules. We drove from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.; we slept in tents and cooked in the open. Besides

being a challenge and a lot of hard work, it was a wonderful experience!" Did the Biel team expect to win? "Every team was hopeful... We did 500 kilometres on the first day. Then we had some minor trouble. After repairs we caught up again, and then the Spirit led all the way, finishing 400 kilometres ahead of the favorite, a Honda." Dr. Graells notes with pride. The Honda solarmobile cost \$15 million to build and develop, compared to a frugal \$600,000 for the Spirit. Frugal was the passport anyway: in liquid fuel terms, the winner ran almost 600 kilometres per litre. Does this mean the streets will soon be humming with solarmobiles? "I'm afraid not," smiles Dr. Graells. For now, "these are purely experimental vehicles. Now electromobility, that's another story." There are quite a number of electromobility on the streets of Switzerland already. Useful for short-range use, most of them are plugged into the national grid at night to recharge their batteries, but some consumers are using solar energy directly: they install a solar panel on their home to generate electricity which is then sold to the national grid.

Electromobility would be a lot more popular if there were a better battery on the market. The silverzinc model in a racing car is expensive; the leadacid commonly used in road vehicles is heavy and bulky. Constant research goes into the development of a lighter, more storage-efficient battery. Mercedes Benz, one of the companies looking at the production of electric vehicles, estimates that just the batteries to power its smaller model would cost \$22,000, and these would need to be changed every three years.

Yet car manufacturers are under pressure to develop non-polluting vehicles fast. The U.S. is taking the lead by requiring that, after 2003, 10 per cent of the industry's production be zero-emissions vehicles. And in California an earlier deadline has been set: by 1998, 2 per cent of the cars sold in that state must be zero-emissions, which creates a market for about 1 million cars. The first company to meet the challenge will probably be Clean Air Transport of Sweden, which plans to have its first production-line vehicle ready by 1993.

Explaining that he and his team are sponsored by the Swiss watch company Swatch, Dr. Graells adds that Swatch is also interested in the production of a low-market, non-polluting vehicle. "We have done some of the research for a proposed 'Swatchmob', a cheap, clean vehicle. It might sell for about \$12,000 to \$15,000," he said. Is there any chance of a Swatchmob becoming a collector's item, like the famous "vegetable" swatches which are designed to imitate red peppers or cucumbers, for example, and are selling for hundreds of dollars? Dr. Graells refuses to be drawn, obviously more at ease with techniques than fashionable design. But one thing is sure, the Engineering School of Biel is getting ready for the next solar challenge. "We're working on it now. We need a better machine for 1993. Lighter, more efficient. And you may be sure — our Japanese friends will be ready!" — World News Links.

Algeria cancels elections

(Continued from page 1)

fighting last June when fundamentalists clashed with security forces.

It also alarmed Algeria's former colonial ruler, France, home to more than one million Algerians.

"The whole scenario is to stop the FIS," said one diplomat.

Arab states reacted to the Algerian president's resignation with official wariness, one press prediction of a coup — and a quick phone call from Libya's Muammar Qadhafi.

Tunisia, which has urged increased vigilance in its own security forces in case the Islamic upsurge spills over its borders, was following events with "great interest."

It paid tribute to Mr. Benjedid and wished Algerians every success in facing this new challenge, a foreign ministry statement added.

But Morocco, another of Algeria's neighbours, remained officially silent. A one line message from its news agency simply stated there was no official comment.

Egypt said it was keeping a close eye on developments and hoped there would be no violence. President Hosni Mubarak called in key cabinet ministers to discuss the situation and later

received a message from a special envoy of Morocco's King Hassan. The contents were not disclosed.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said: "There is no doubt that what is happening in Algeria is very important and we are following it closely and hope our sister Algeria will achieve the peace and stability it wants."

He told reporters he could not predict the impact on Arab relations.

The headline in Lebanon's independent Al Diyar newspaper read: "Chadli resigns and Algeria on the verge of a military coup."

One of its radio stations, which interrupted programmes on Saturday night with the news, said Sunday: "Algeria steps into an unknown future with the resignation..."

In contrast, the official media in Syria and several other Arab states carried the bare facts without comment.

The Libyan news agency JANA said Colonel Qadhafi had a telephone conversation with Mr. Benjedid after his resignation but did not disclose what they said.

The U.S. State Department and the British Foreign Office travel advisories warning citizens to exercise caution in Algeria.

After Mr. Benjedid's resignation, troops quickly took up positions around government and communications buildings in the capital, raising fears of a military takeover.

But the defence ministry said in a statement early Sunday that the army "reaffirms its loyalty to the constitution and its confidence in the existing constitutional institutions."

The military has generally been loyal to Mr. Benjedid and his goals of bringing democracy to the nation, but elements in the army have been pressuring him to thwart a fundamentalist victory.

Opposition fundamentalists overwhelmingly defeated Mr. Benjedid's ruling National Liberation Front — which had held power since Algeria gained its independence from France in 1962 — in the first round of voting for a new parliament Dec. 26.

The Islamic Salvation Front won 188 of the 231 parliamentary seats decided in the first round, only 28 short of a majority. The seats decided in the first round, only 28 short of a majority. The second round of elections was to decide 199 seats in which no candidate received a majority.

Mr. Benhabyles' constitutional council was to have ruled Saturday on challenges to results of 145 seats from the first round of voting, but Mr. Benjedid's sudden resignation short-circuited that.

The independent newspaper Al Watan said Sunday that "the big unknown is how the Islamic Salvation Front will react. It must feel extremely cheated out of certain victory in the legislative elections."

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Foreign Exchange Market Summary (January 6 - January 10, 1992)

AMMAN — Technical considerations interacted with economic fundamentals producing unexpected steep fluctuations in exchange rates last week. Yen rates attracted most of the attention in view of President Bush's visit to Japan. The U.S. currency rose sharply towards the end of the week, finishing in average of 2.8 per cent higher against European currencies and 1.9 per cent against the yen.

Having covered some short dollar positions the previous week, traders refocused Monday on the fundamentals behind the U.S. currency's weakness; its lower short-term interest rates compared to major currencies and the faltering U.S. economic recovery. The dollar traded sharply lower, closing at its lowest level of the week against the Japanese currency at 123.35 yen as traders discounted widely held expectations of a higher yen following the conclusion of the Bush/Miyazawa summit.

Tuesday was mixed for the dollar, which sank to a low of 122.81 yen to the dollar in the Far East markets, breaching support at 123 yen for the first time in three years. But when no specific mention of a pact to reduce the Japanese trade surplus through a higher yen was made by the Tokyo summit, the Japanese currency fell back. The dollar, however, continued to decline against European currencies, closing at its lowest levels of the week at 1.5065 marks and \$1.8868 to the pound sterling.

Speculators continued to dominate Wednesday, encouraged by the absence of decisive indicators, causing more fluctuations in exchange rates. The U.S. unit hit a high of 1.5195 against the mark during trading hours before retreating on profit-taking. In Tokyo, President Bush and Prime Minister Miyazawa produced a communique which maintained that recent exchange rates reflect economic developments, and hence continued to the dollar's rebound against its Japanese counterpart.

Starting on the other hand, continued to weaken against other European currencies, reaching 2.8325 marks, and raising speculations of a potential Bank of England intervention to support the British unit. Towards the end of the week, the dollar rallied against all major currencies. The rally started Thursday on rumours sparked by an unconfirmed report in a Japanese newspaper, that several European countries planned to seek a dollar "correction" at the next G-7 meeting, although confused about the credibility of the rumours, traders covered their short dollar positions, as the currency several resistance levels, before it closed at 1.5605 marks and 125.82 yen. Safe-haven demand on news of rising tension between the Ukraine and Russia, further fuelled the dollar's rise.

The release of a better than expected employment figures in the U.S. Friday further added to the confusion, triggering additional waves of dollar short-covering. U.S. Non-Farm payrolls climbed by 31,000 in December, against expectations of a drop of 70,000. Analysts, however, insisted that the fundamentals of the market had not changed, and attributed the rally to technical considerations. They explained that the improvement in the employment figures were seasonal, originating from the government sector rather than the manufacturing or services sectors. The dollar thus ended the week at its highest closing levels of the week.

Much confusion abounds as to expected currency movements this week. While fundamentals still argue for a lower dollar in the opinion of many observers, the violent nature of the dollar's rebound has left many traders unsure about the direction of its next move.

New York Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

Currency	3/11/1992 Close	10/11/1992 Close	Percent Change
Sterling Pound	1.8490	1.7850	- 3.27%
Deutsche Mark	1.5430	1.5845	- 2.26%
Swiss Franc	1.3746	1.4128	- 2.70%
French Franc	9.2675	9.7075	- 2.60%
Japanese Yen	124.65	127.10	- 1.9%

USD Per NTN

Euro-Currency Interest Rates

Currency	3/11/1992 1-Month (%)	10/11/1992 1-Month (%)	3/11/1992 1-Year (%)	10/11/1992 1-Year (%)
U.S. Dollar	4.06	4.25	4.00	4.31
Sterling Pound	10.50	10.56	10.44	10.31
Deutsche Mark	9.37	9.37	9.25	9.18
Swiss Franc	7.81	7.93	7.62	7.62
French Franc	10.15	9.79	9.88	9.56
Japanese Yen	5.56	5.15	5.31	4.95

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6790	0.6810
Sterling Pound	1.2131	1.2192
Deutsche Mark	0.4288	0.4309
Swiss Franc	0.4816	0.4840
French Franc	0.1255	0.1261
Japanese Yen	0.5337	0.5364
Dutch Guilder	0.3796	0.3816
Swedish Krona	0.1184	0.1190
Italian Lira	0.0567	0.0570
Belgian Franc	0.02079	0.02089

Per 100

UAE to use 1991 budget as basis for 92

ABU DHABI (R) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) federal government was told Sunday to keep expenditure in line with last year's budget pending approval of a 1992 budget, the official Emirates news agency WAM reported.

The UAE government has for several years not been able to publish a federal budget on time because of uncertainties about oil price trends.

As in past years, a decree issued by President Zaid Bin Sultan Al Nahayan said government departments would be allocated one-twelfth of the previous year's expenditure estimates until the federal budget is approved.

The decree said the ministries were not allowed to exceed the monthly allocations and prior permission should be sought from

the ministry of finance and industry for anything extra.

The seven autonomous emirates which make up the UAE are supposed to fund the federal budget but in reality Abu Dhabi, the biggest oil producer and the richest emirate, normally provides some 75 per cent of federal income. The rest is made up by the emirate of Dubai, the second biggest UAE oil producer, and by federal service fees.

The UAE's 1991 budget, which was announced at the end of July, envisaged a 1.2 billion dirham (\$326 million) deficit, almost double the 1990 deficit of 670 million dirhams (\$182 million).

Budget revenue for 1991 was set at 15.2 billion dirhams (\$4.13 billion) and expenditure at 16.4 billion dirhams (\$4.45 billion).

It is not known when the 1992 budget will be announced.

Miyazawa predicts Asia will be world's largest economy



Kiichi Miyazawa

TOKYO (R) — Japan's Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa has predicted that Asia will become the largest economy in the world but will not form an exclusive trade bloc.

"Fortunately, (Asia) has diversified cultures, races, and historic and economic developments," Mr. Miyazawa said in a lunch speech to businessmen.

"Our region will not be anything like the bloc formed by the United States, Canada and Mexico and that formed by the EC (European Community)," he said.

Mr. Miyazawa said he wanted Asia to be the most attractive region for investors and he was optimistic about its future prosperity. He did not elaborate.

The prime minister repeated an earlier forecast that the combined gross national product (GNP) of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), newly industrialising Asian economies (NIES) and Japan would exceed the total GNP of the United States, Canada and Mexico between the years 2010-2015.

ASEAN groups Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The NIES are South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong.

GNP is the total value of goods and services produced by an economy.

Mr. Miyazawa, after completing a series of trade agreements with U.S. President George Bush, has said that he sees little else that could be done to even out the trade gap between the United States and Japan.

In a taped television interview, Mr. Miyazawa acknowledged that trade was the biggest source of friction between Tokyo and Washington.

But he said there is little more that Japan can do to improve the trading relationship between the two countries — a relationship in which the United States currently has a \$41 billion annual shortfall with Japan.

"(The) United States and

Japan have been discussing this trade problem for over 10 years in the past, and we have made a great headway," Mr. Miyazawa said on the Cable News Network.

"So, I really don't think after this very lengthy, almost exhaustive study there is much we can do or they want to ask us to do," he said, speaking in English.

Mr. Miyazawa also said that Japan's markets have not been as restricted as most Americans believe, despite complaints by company executives and politicians of trade barriers.

"Japanese markets are not as closed as most Americans like to think, but not as open as most Japanese people like to believe," he said. "The truth is probably in between."

"Certainly, Mr. Bush and myself discussed the economic problems between our two countries over the past three days, and we have been able to come up with a mutually satisfactory answer which represents some of the criticism against Japanese markets not being level playing," he added.

Mr. Bush returned to Washington Friday having to defend his trade mission to Japan and other Asian countries against criticism that it did little to revive the flagging U.S. economy.

Among the concessions Mr. Bush won from Japan was an agreement to more than double its imports of U.S. car parts to \$19 billion a year. But car company executives who accompanied Mr. Bush on the trip were less than satisfied with the deal.

Mr. Miyazawa also said he believes Mr. Bush will win reelection in November despite his low approval showing of less than 50 per cent in a recent poll and widespread dissatisfaction with his handling of the economy.

Commenting on "Japan bashing" by U.S. politicians and corporate executives, Mr. Miyazawa said that the end of the cold war and the disintegration of the Soviet Union may have left Japan as a new national adversary in the minds of some Americans.

Rich fared better than poor in 1980s

U.S. states reel under recession

NEW YORK (Agencies) — The U.S. recession has created depression-like gloom in many of the 50 states as governors desperately raise taxes, sack state workers and slash services to the poor to balance their budgets.

But groups that monitor the financial health of the states say the worst may be still to come as health care and other legally mandated costs spin wildly out of control, creating a nightmare for politicians and fury among voters.

As state officials debate what services to slash, many are zeroing in on welfare, stirring charges that a class war could be in the offing if the poor are made to suffer the most.

In Michigan, 83,000 adults were cut from the general assistance rolls to help balance the budget without new taxes.

Political fallout from the recession has been significant, with some governors fighting for survival just months after easily winning elections.

Connecticut Governor Lowell Weicker and New Jersey Governor Jim Florio have become anathema to many voters in their states because they raised taxes — in Mr. Weicker's case by introducing the state's first income tax.

In New York, Democratic Governor Mario Cuomo decided not to run for president because of his state's grave financial difficulties. Virginia Democratic Governor Douglas Wilder also dropped out of the presidential race citing his state's economic problems as the reason.

Mr. Cuomo and other governors find their states in desperate shape even after taxes have been shot up to record levels, and they are forced to go back to the drawing boards to cut even more.

Unlike the federal government, the states must balance

their budgets each year and falling revenue has forced 32 states to revise their budgets with new rounds of taxes or service cuts.

The National Governors' Association says state raised taxes in 1991 by a record \$15 billion while cutting services by \$7.5 billion to keep budgets balanced.

Brian Rothery, executive director of the National Association of State Budget Associations, said the states' problems are being compounded by skyrocketing health care costs that they are legally mandated to pay.

One of the states worst hit by the recession is California. After raising taxes in mid-1991 by \$7 billion and ordering a hiring freeze, Republican Governor Pete Wilson faces an estimated \$6 billion shortfall over the next 18 months.

Mr. Wilson told the Democratic-controlled legislature on Thursday that he will not raise taxes again and wants Californians to vote on a "taxpayer protection act" that would cut welfare benefits by as much as 25 per cent to some people.

By the year 2000, growing welfare rolls and school population will push the California state budget \$20 billion into the red every year, Mr. Wilson said.

In Pennsylvania, the popularity of Democratic Governor Robert Casey has plummeted since he signed the state's biggest-ever tax increase last year, months after winning landslide reelection to a second four-year term.

"The increase, meant to cover a \$450 million budget shortfall, included almost doubling the income tax and extending state sales tax to a broader range of products."

Illinois Governor Jim Edgar said the nation's sixth-largest state needed to cut \$350 million from its budget to bridge a gap caused by the national recession,

Michigan Governor John Engler recently cut social services spending by \$300 million, knocking 83,000 single adults off general assistance. Each had received \$141 a month.

Ed Rowe, a Methodist pastor in Detroit, said 10 per cent of those who lost welfare payments ended up in jail, erasing any savings.

"We're not talking about the plight of the poor, we're talking about the fight of the poor... we're not rolling over and playing dead," Pastor Rowe said.

According to an analysis published by the Federal Reserve Bank, wealthy Americans benefited more from the rapid economic growth of the mid-1980s than their poorer neighbours.

Families' median pre-tax incomes, when adjusted for inflation, were virtually unchanged between 1983 and 1989, according to surveys of consumer finances conducted by the University of Michigan.

But while median incomes advanced just \$100 to \$34,400, the surveys show, inflation-adjusted average or mean incomes jumped \$2,300, from \$33,400 to \$35,700. The median means that half of the families earned more and half earned less.

"These findings suggest that incomes above the median grew faster than those below the median and that the distribution of family income became somewhat more concentrated among families with higher income," according to an analysis published in the January Federal Reserve (Fed) bulletin.

The 1983 and 1989 surveys were sponsored by the Fed — the U.S. central bank — and various other federal agencies. The analysis was prepared by Arthur Kennickell and Janice Shack-Marquez of the Fed's Division of Research and Statistics.

"Changes in the overall real net worth of families — the difference between families' total assets and their total debts — were more dramatic than changes in family income," the authors wrote.

The surveys show that average net worth rose more than 23 per cent, from \$149,100 to \$183,700, during the six years of rapid economic expansion. Still, median net worth rose only 11 per cent, from \$42,700 to \$47,200.

"The contrast between the mean and median suggests an increase in the concentration of net worth among wealthy families," the Fed analysis contends.

Despite constant overall median family incomes, the surveys show mixed changes among various demographic groups.

"The median income for families headed by persons with at least some college experience rose, but this increase was offset by declines in all other education categories," Mr. Kennickell and Ms. Shack-Marquez wrote.

At the same time, they added, a moderate increase for white families was offset by a decline for nonwhite and Hispanic families.

A further breakdown of average incomes shows that the income of families headed by persons under 55 increased while those headed by persons between 55 and 74 declined.

The Fed report said average incomes of homeowners and whites rose while those of renters and of nonwhites and Hispanics fell.

Homeowners experienced a \$3,500 increase in average incomes, to \$44,400, while renters' average incomes dropped \$1,000 to \$19,600. Whites enjoyed a \$2,000 advance in their incomes, while nonwhites and Hispanics saw their earnings fall \$1,600 to \$19,500.

Russia still holds financial reins of Commonwealth of Independent States

MOSCOW (R) — Russia's central bank has taken a firm grip on the financial reins of the new Commonwealth of Independent States stressing that it controlled the supply of cash and setting new rules on the value of the rouble.

In a clear warning that other republics in the former Soviet Union would have to tolerate its monetary policies, Russian central bank chairman Georgy Matyukhin said the bank would supply republics with cash only on its own terms.

"We will provide them with money, but it will not be free, of course. Money is a special commodity," he told Reuters.

Mr. Matyukhin also said his bank planned to introduce a new exchange rate for the rouble against the dollar, probably letting investors buy roubles at a rate of eight or 10 roubles per dollar, against the bank's market rate of 110 roubles per dollar and the commercial rate of 55 roubles.

The Russian central bank won responsibility for printing and distributing money for all republics of the now defunct Soviet Union in January, assuming this role from the Soviet state bank.

The rouble is legal tender in all 15 former Soviet republics, although some are introducing coupons as a parallel currency

and as a first step towards creating their own money.

Mr. Matyukhin said republics deciding to introduce their own currency might face problems. The rouble has likely to play a leading role rather like the key role of the Deutschmark within the European Community's European Monetary System.

"We will have advantages, although some of the republics do not understand this," he said. "Inevitably the demand for the rouble will be much higher than the demand for the currency of Lithuania or for the currency of Ukraine."

He said some republics had been slow to recognise that economic changes had taken place since the Soviet Union ceased to exist and Russia took on responsibility for monetary policy.

"They still try to preserve the previous system of a big union basket of money," he said. "Each republic took money... and because they had big spoons they could take money rapidly from the common basket."

Mr. Matyukhin said the new rouble rate was aimed at foreign investors, but there was still a long way to go before the tightly controlled unit could be made convertible against other currencies.

"We must stimulate investment

from the West, but at the same time it is in our own interest not to sell our property for nothing," he said.

Mr. Matyukhin said control on monetary growth was vital if his bank was to fulfil its main task of controlling inflation.

Prices are already spiralling upwards under the impact of the Russian government's Jan. 2 move to free prices in the first stage of a switch to a market economy.

"The level of inflation will depend on whether we manage to establish a real market or competition. If not, I do not see any limits for prices," he said.

Some experts expect consumer prices to more than double this month, although government officials hope the monthly rate of inflation will slow to 10 per cent by spring or summer.

Mr. Matyukhin said he could not predict future inflation rates. The printing presses taken over by the Russian central bank have been working flat out for weeks to meet the surging demand for cash, and Mr. Matyukhin confirmed Russian media reports that the central bank was running desperately short of money.

He said Russia had not target for monetary growth in 1992. "It is still hard to have targets because... we have not enough information about the impacts of price rises or liberalisation."

Mr. Matyukhin said the central bank was trying to wean Russians from their cash-oriented society. It planned to introduce a new system of chequeing accounts this month.

Mr. Matyukhin also said that Russia wants more time to repay interest on foreign debt because other commonwealth states are failing to come up with their

share of the cash.

He said Russia, the most powerful member of the Commonwealth of Independent States, would ask for understanding at a meeting in Frankfurt this week with a committee of Western banks.

"We are asking foreign banks to wait a little bit until we solve our internal problems," he told Reuters in an interview.

But he said no formal request for a deferral of interest payments would be lodged. "We need some breathing space to raise some funds... we started the new year with a zero level of foreign exchange," he said.

Western governments and banks have already agreed to a deferral of debt principal payments to allow former Soviet republics extra time to implement economic reforms.

British bankers were disappointed at the latest repayment difficulties. "It's a shame for a country which has had such an excellent payments record to be in this situation," one said.

Mr. Matyukhin criticised other republics for failing to contribute to servicing the \$60 to \$70 billion in foreign debt inherited after last year's break-up of the Soviet Union.

"We are trying to persuade our republics to participate in those payments," he said.

He appealed for understanding from creditors.

"If they do not understand, then we have no other way than to declare our 'Vneshekonombank bankrupt'," he said.

Vneshekonombank, the former Soviet Bank for Foreign Economic Affairs, is a commercial bank with responsibility for foreign debt servicing and trading in precious metals and stones.

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Ukraine gets part of Black Sea Fleet

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Russia has moved to heal a rift with Ukraine by awarding part of the disputed Black Sea Fleet to Kiev, a joint communiqué published by TASS News Agency said.

The two sides said they agreed that part of the powerful fleet would be excluded from strategic forces under joint Commonwealth control and "become part of the armed forces of Ukraine."

Ukraine has previously demanded full control of the entire fleet from July, with Russia insisting it should remain under Commonwealth command.

The dispute between the two most powerful republics had threatened a disastrous split in the Commonwealth of Independent States which emerged last month with the collapse of the Soviet Union.

"The negotiations have helped to strengthen trust and cooperation in the relations between Ukraine and the Russian Federation," said the statement, signed after a day of talks in the Ukrainian capital Kiev.

It did not make clear how the fleet of 300 ships and 70,000 men would be divided.

It seemed likely, however, that Russia had gone further than a previous offer to hand over a small part of the fleet for purely local tasks such as border protection.

Ukraine, which won its independence last month, has declared it must become a naval power. It has already begun forming its own army on the basis of former Soviet army units on its territory.

Both sides pledged to refrain from unilateral actions and to resolve all contentious points through negotiation, including the civil and political status of servicemen, connected with the reorganisation of the armed forces.

Addressing Western concern about their commitment to East-West arms accords, Russia and Ukraine said they would start negotiating immediately on how to fulfil Moscow's agreements on international security and disarmament.

They pledged to act swiftly to ratify the U.S.-Soviet START accord cutting strategic nuclear arsenals and the 1990 Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) agreement reducing forces from the Atlantic to the Urals.

The talks were led on the Russian side by Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Shakhrai, and for Ukraine by Minister of State for Defence Viktor Antonov.

With a proud history dating back to Empress Catherine the Great, the Black Sea Fleet is a



tempting prize and a powerful national symbol to Russians and Ukrainians alike.

The agreement followed a statement of "profound concern" over the row by the Belarussian parliament, which also became the latest to take control of Soviet Armed Forces on its territory in order to build its own army.

If the Kiev agreement sticks, all sides may now be able to turn their attention to the dire economic problems afflicting the entire Commonwealth.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin, addressing industrialists in Moscow, defended his decision to free prices on Jan. 2, which has led to increasing of up to 10 times.

He said the state would give special support to enterprises producing consumer goods, which are in chronically short supply. "The task now is to achieve high buying power for all levels of the population without exception."

The Black Sea Fleet agreement did not specifically address Ukraine's plan to administer oaths of allegiance to many of the 1.3 million former Soviet soldiers on its territory. It said only that talks would address "the civil and political status of servicemen in connection with the reorganisation of armed forces," TASS reported.

Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk has delayed the oath-taking ceremonies six months, but his plans have spurred neighbours to devise defence plans of their own.

Mr. Yeltsin reportedly has prepared a decree that would seize and keep control of all troops in the Commonwealth until Ukraine and the other states agree to a unified force.

He apparently was trying to ease Western concern about military fragmentation, and force Ukraine and other states either to accept unified control or face a new adversary in Russia.

Ousted Georgian leader gets temporary asylum

MOSCOW (AP) — The acting Georgian Prime Minister said Armenia has agreed to move ousted Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia away from the border between the two former Soviet republics, Russian Television reported Sunday.

Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua told a news conference in Tbilisi that he had asked Armenian authorities to move Mr. Gamsakhurdia closer to the Armenian capital of Yerevan, the Vesti afternoon news programme said.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia, his family and an entourage including several dozen armed bodyguards fled last week to the small Armenian border town of Idjevan, about 80 kilometres south of the Georgian capital of Tbilisi.

They left following 16 days of bloody fighting against opponents who demanded Mr. Gamsakhurdia's ouster. The Georgian Health Ministry has said 113 people were killed and 420 wounded during the fighting, the TASS News Agency reported.

Although Gamsakhurdia overwhelmingly won free elections last May, opponents claimed he had become dictatorial, jailing critics and closing newspapers. Armenia earlier said that it is seeking another country to give refuge to Mr. Gamsakhurdia, and ruled out granting him political asylum.

But news agencies reported Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosian as saying Saturday that Mr. Gamsakhurdia could have temporary asylum in Armenia if he gave up his arms. There has been no public reaction from Mr. Gamsakhurdia.

Meanwhile, Vesti reported that the opposition-formed Military Council that took power in Tbilisi last week has disbanded. It did not elaborate. Mr. Sigua said earlier that the Military Council would likely turn over power to an interim civilian government by Monday.

Although armed soldiers are still checking documents on the streets of Tbilisi, newspapers have resumed publishing and both local and Russian television broadcasts are being shown in the city, Vesti said. However, the news report said the situation is still "far from being stable."

Airports and most public transportation are functioning, but a railway strike that began Saturday is continuing, Vesti said. As many as 20 trains with about 7,000 passengers are stopped on the Russian side of the border with Georgia, Russian Radio said.

On Saturday, armed supporters of Mr. Gamsakhurdia crossed back into western Georgia from Armenia and clashed with border guards. Four people were reportedly wounded, the Russian Information Agency said.

Yugoslavia's break-up set to become official

BELGRADE (R) — The break-up of Yugoslavia becomes official this week when European Community countries start recognising its rebel republics.

Western diplomats expressed concern the disintegration of the country of 23.5 million people, forged in 1918, could fuel rival territorial claims across the Balkan peninsula.

Greece and Bulgaria are already trading angry words, with Sofia backing independence for the Republic of Macedonia and Athens saying this would encourage the republic's territorial ambitions against Greece.

The European Community (EC) set Jan. 15 as the date when EC states can begin recognising and establishing diplomatic ties with Yugoslav republics seeking independence.

Reflecting the EC's own clash of interest in the Balkans, it is unclear whether the Community as a whole will recognise some of the four republics seeking independence or each EC member will make its own choices.

But the process of dismembering Yugoslavia — literally the land of the southern Slavs — has begun, marking the end of the Balkan state forged from the wreckage of World War II.

Serbia, a largely Christian Orthodox republic and the last remnant of post-World War II Communist Yugoslavia, has waged a six-month war to hold together even a truncated Yugoslavia state.

But with the northern Roman Catholic republics of Slovenia and Croatia about to be recognised as independent, what remains of Yugoslavia will be little more than the Serbian state which existed before World War I.

While EC countries, led by Germany and Italy, prepare to recognise at least Slovenia and Croatia this week and busy themselves with opening new embassies, a tense truce has been largely holding.

More than 6,000 people have been killed in heavy fighting in Croatia since June, with rebel

Croatian militias facing off against the Serbian-led federal army and Serbian irregulars.

Although there were a dozen minor violations at the weekend, the 15th ceasefire since July appeared to be holding and an advance contingent of U.N. peacekeepers was due this week.

U.N. special envoy Cyrus Vance hammered out the ceasefire early this month. It was one of several conditions before some 10,000 U.N. troops take up positions on the front in Croatia.

The first 50 U.N. liaison officers will check on the truce and report on whether conditions are right for other forces to be deployed.

The dispatching of U.N. troops has been overshadowed by the shooting down of a clearly marked EC helicopter by an air force jet Tuesday, killing five unarmed EC peace monitors aboard.

The EC accused the Yugoslav military over the weekend of making inaccurate statements on the incident and said the EC had permission to fly. The military said Friday the EC helicopter was airborne without permission.

It was the most serious violation of the U.N. truce, which went into force on Jan. 3. The five were the first EC peace monitors to be killed in Yugoslavia.

Despite the incident most political commentators have said the latest Vance peace plan may have the best chance to date of succeeding, although serious obstacles remain.

But for the first time Serbian Communist leader Slobodan Milosevic appears to have dropped demands Serbian minorities outside his republic be allowed to join, with their territory, in what would essentially be a new greater Serbian state.

Although leaders of the Serbian minorities — there are some 600,000 Serbs in Croatia alone — denounced Mr. Milosevic's deal with Mr. Vance, it appears an orderly break-up of the rival Republics of Serbia and Croatia could finally be in the offing.

Phnom Penh: Armed group undermining peace pact

BANGKOK (AP) — The Cambodian government says an identified armed group are threatening a peace accord by dismissing village governments, Vietnamese media reported Sunday.

The Vietnamese-backed government raised the issue at Saturday's meeting in Phnom Penh of the peacemaking Supreme National Council (SNC), the official Vietnam News Agency said a dispatch monitored in Bangkok.

The SNC, which includes representatives of the government and three guerrilla groups in Cambodia's civil war, is trying to carry out a peace treaty they signed in October to end 15 years of fighting.

The Phnom Penh government said armed groups were robbing villagers, conducting unspecified political activities and announcing

in violation of the peace accord that the Supreme National Council was replacing local leaders, the Vietnamese agency reported.

Under the peace plan, the council has only advisory powers. The Phnom Penh government and the United Nations are to govern jointly until elections scheduled for 1993.

No guerrilla faction has admitted to the actions, the government said, and that could mean a "new category of armed political force" is trying to interfere with peace efforts.

"This represents the greatest danger for the process of implementation of the political settlement and would... destroy the neutral environment and safety required for holding elections," the government statement said.

After the killings and hunger, Liberia starts to heal

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP) — A year before a West African army forced a ceasefire in November 1990.

"A rocket hit their house and Precious, he was 22 and had just graduated from university, fled with a friend. They were stopped by soldiers who demanded ID. Precious had his, but his friend didn't. So they said they were rebels and killed them."

Monrovia and life since the war are "like a patchwork quilt. You keep finding pieces, but so many are missing," said Mrs. George, who has returned to her job as an administrative assistant for the U.N. World Food Programme.

She received news of her living sister, Juanita Scott, from a Lutheran World Services relief worker who travelled behind rebel lines. Mrs. Scott lives with her disabled husband in Suehna, a town in Bong County, central Liberia.

Like many Liberian families, the sisters are separated by checkpoints manned by rebel leader Charles Taylor's fighters, an unruly lot who extort bribes. On Friday, Mr. Taylor opened two of three roads between Monrovia and the interior.

The United Nations suspended operations in Liberia after a Liberian army assault May 29, 1990, on its compound, where hundreds of refugees had taken refuge.

Thirty men were taken away by the soldiers. The sole survivor said the others were massacred on a beach that had become a favourite killing ground.

Two months later, soldiers attacked nearby St. Peter's Lutheran Church, where 2,000 people were sheltered. They slaughtered about 200, mainly women and chil-

dren, with submachine guns, bayonets and swords.

Doe's soldiers, numbering from 3,000 to 7,000 by various estimates, now are camped at two barracks and insist they still are Liberia's official army.

Mr. Taylor started the war with an invasion from neighbouring Ivory Coast on Christmas Eve, 1989. A breakthrough group beat him to Monrovia, caught Doe and tortured him to death.

Now, Mr. Taylor is accused of stalling on a peace plan brokered by West African nations that calls for him to disarm his 10,000 fighters and permit elections.

Although his forces were unable to seize the capital, they have overrun the rest of Liberia, a West African nation about the size of Ohio founded in 1847 by freed American slaves.

For Myrtle Gibson, a businesswoman turned relief worker, getting on with life means refurbishing a five-bedroom villa that had sheltered 100 people.

About 600,000 refugees are in neighbouring lands and an estimated 1 million of Liberia's 2.5 million people are believed to have been forced out of their homes.

Mrs. Gibson got running water into her house a week ago. It gushed from a newly repaired reservoir through taps that would not close. Neighbours came fill buckets, bottles, even garbage cans.

White Plains, a U.S.-built dam outside the capital that provided water and hydroelectric power, was badly damaged in the war. Germany has approved a loan for its repair.

Monrovia was without piped water for more than a year. Little has been available since en-

COLUMN

Bush said to have overruled doctor on Tokyo trip

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. President George Bush overruled his doctor's advice to skip an official dinner in Japan Wednesday at which he fainted and vomited, fearing that his absence would disrupt the event, the Washington Post reported Saturday. Mr. Bush, after a long and gruelling day Wednesday, was advised "a couple of times" by his physician, Burton Lee III, to skip the dinner, the Post quoted Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady as saying in a telephone interview from Japan. But the flu-stricken president "just didn't want to do that, you know, disappointing all those people, disrupting the event," the newspaper quoted Mr. Brady as saying.

The dinner ended at the side of his host, Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa. His collapse — captured by television cameras — temporarily overwhelmed stories of his trade mission to Japan and fed public concern about the qualifications of Vice President Dan Quayle to step in and replace him in an emergency.

Former mayor to be punished for prison episode

WASHINGTON (AP) — Prison officials have recommended that former Washington Mayor Marion Barry be moved to another penitentiary and placed in 30 days isolation after allegations that a woman performed oral sex on him in a prison visiting room, one of his attorneys said. Officials at the Federal Minimum Security Prison in Petersburg, Virginia, held a disciplinary hearing Friday on the allegations, which Mr. Barry has denied. A hearing examiner was expected to make a decision on the recommendation later. Citing Mr. Barry's rights under the federal privacy act, prison officials in Petersburg and Washington said only that the investigation has been completed. One of Mr. Barry's attorneys, Beverly Crawford, said in a telephone interview from her Richmond office that Mr. Barry expected to be found guilty of the infraction and transferred immediately to a medium security federal prison, possibly in Danbury, Connecticut. The investigative report also recommended that the woman who visited Mr. Barry on Dec. 29 be prohibited from seeing him for 120 days. The former mayor of the nation's capital is serving a six-month sentence at Petersburg on a misdemeanor conviction for cocaine possession.

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope John Paul II Friday praised couples who practise "marital chastity" as a birth-control method. Addressing a group who had been studying what the Vatican calls "natural methods" of birth control, the Pontiff said that marital chastity during a woman's fertile period prevents sex from disintegrating into egoism. It also acknowledges the link between the increasingly accurate knowledge of the rhythms of fertility of the female organism finds its proper horizon and the condition for its morally correct use in the perspective of marital chastity," he added. The Catholic Church bans use of artificial birth control, but allows couples to follow the so-called "rhythm method," which entails abstinence from sexual activity during a woman's fertile period. Use of artificial birth control, the Pope said, "reflects a pessimistic judgment on existence, and a preference for immediate pleasures."

Pope hails practice of 'marital chastity'

Sweden to give bodyguards to women threatened by men

STOCKHOLM (R) — The Swedish government may soon provide state-funded bodyguards for women threatened by violence from male tormentors, including ex-boyfriends, a budget proposal revealed. The new centre-right government's 1992/93 budget has allocated 10 million crowns (\$1.75 million) for a trial programme providing bodyguards for women threatened by men. Justice Minister Gun Hellsvik says private citizens facing the threat of violence should have the same right to protection as public figures, including politicians. Swedish media frequently run stories about women forced to go into hiding or even take a new identity to evade male tormentors.

Bonn announces large military cuts

BONN (AP) — Germany will slash its planned defence spending by more than one-third over the next 13 years and reduce much of its inventory of heavy military equipment, its defence minister announced.

Defence Secretary Gerhard Stoltenberg said the planned defence cuts and military realignments reflected changing world security in the post-cold war era, as well as Germany's own budgetary constraints.

Since it absorbed largely bankrupt former east Germany in 1990, Germany has been struggling to bring the east up to western living standards, largely through budget cuts and tax increases.

Following a meeting of leaders of the Bundeswehr, as the German military is known, Mr. Stoltenberg said military spending for 1993 through 2005 was expected to total 117 billion marks (\$70

billion). That represents a decrease of 43.7 billion marks (\$29 billion) in planned defence spending, or about 35 per cent.

Most likely to be affected will be plans for transport planes, tanks, heavy artillery, ships and other hardware for the German Air Force, the defence minister told a press conference.

Plans to spend 20.7 billion marks (\$13.8 billion) on new battle tanks, anti-mine systems and upgrades on armoured helicopters were axed completely, he said.

Mr. Stoltenberg said that while the air force would need a new jet fighter after 2000, plans to go ahead with a sophisticated new European jet fighter — called the Jaeger 90 — were on hold.

A decision on whether to proceed with that jet fighter or go with one of the established mod-

els is expected later this year, he said.

Mr. Stoltenberg said another 23 billion marks (\$15 billion) would be saved closing down some facilities.

He said the planned changes would make the German military more mobile and enable it to participate in rapid deployment forces, including United Nations peacekeeping missions.

To do that, however, Germany would have to abolish its constitutional restrictions on military involvement outside the area of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

Since the Gulf war, Germany has been debating whether to change its constitution to allow it to join U.N. missions. Chancellor Helmut Kohl, noting Germany's increasing role in international politics, has said he will push for a constitutional change.

Filipino presidential candidate hospitalised

MANILA (AP) — House Speaker Ramon Mitra, a leading candidate in next May's presidential election, was hospitalised Saturday after falling off a horse at his ranch south of Manila.

Mr. Mitra was flown to a suburban hospital where doctors said he was suffering from bruises but no broken bones.

Aides said a film crew was preparing to photograph Mr. Mitra for campaign advertisements when his horse suddenly reared up and tossed the speaker onto the ground.

On Nov. 30, Mr. Mitra defeated former Defence Secretary Fidel Ramos in a straw vote for the nomination of the pro-administration struggle of the Democratic Filipino Party in the May 11 election.

Mr. Mitra is expected to win the party's final endorsement later this month.

President Corason Aquino has ruled out a second term but is expected to endorse her favourite this month.

Aides say she has narrowed her choice to Mr. Mitra, Gen. Ramos or former Supreme Court Chief Justice Marcelo Fernan.

Bulgarians vote in presidential elections

SOFIA (R) — Voters went to the polls in Bulgaria's first presidential elections Sunday, but there was a marked lack of enthusiasm in the early stages of balloting. Bulgarian radio said that in the first three hours of voting only three to four per cent of the country's six million voters visited polling stations. Most of the early voters were pensioners.

Favourite among the 21 candidates in the race is President Zhelev Zhelev, 56, a former dissident who was appointed head of state in 1990 by Bulgaria's first multi-party parliament after four decades of Communist rule.

Before Mr. Zhelev's appointment, the presidency was monopolised for 18 years by hardline Communist Todor Zhivkov.

It was later held for seven months by Mr. Zhivkov's former Foreign Minister Petar Mladenov, who helped oust his predecessor in November 1989.

Mr. Zhelev, former leader of the ruling anti-Communist Union of Democratic Forces (UDF), enjoys the support of non-Communist forces outside parliament as well as the country's 1.5 million ethnic Turks.

Pre-election opinion surveys estimated he would win 56 per cent of votes. A second round is due to be held next Sunday if none of the candidates win a clear majority.

"Zhelev is the most suitable president because he is moderate and balances well between the different political forces," retired lawyer Vladimir Tomov said outside one polling station.

Following adoption of a new constitution last year the powers of Bulgaria's president are largely ceremonial, but the head of state remains commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

The former Communist Party, now renamed Socialist, has no formal candidate of its own. But it is backing a number of "independent" candidates, including the parliamentary deputy of the Socialists, Velko Valkanov.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

3 sentenced to death in Cuba

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Three Miami men accused of trying to invade Cuba and start a rebellion against President Fidel Castro were sentenced Saturday to death by firing squad, the Cuban news agency Prensa Latina reported. The Havana province prosecutor's office was quoted as saying the Supreme Tribunal early this week would review the sentence for Eduardo Diaz Betancourt, 30; Daniel Candelario Santovenia, 36; and Pedro de la Cardada Alvarez Pedros, 26. The Mexican News Agency Notimex said they are permanent residents in Miami. A statement faxed to the Associated Press in Miami said the men belonged to an anti-Castro group, previously unknown, called Rescue. It threatened retaliation if they are executed. Prensa Latina said the three men confessed to training in southern Florida for a terrorist mission in Cuba with the full knowledge of American authorities. Vice President Raul Castro, the president's brother, accused Washington of creating a "state of danger" by encouraging dissidents and "converting them into pilgrims in search of liberty," the Cuba News Agency reported.

Bhutto hospitalised for kidney infection

KARACHI, Pakistan (R) — Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto was admitted to hospital for the treatment of a kidney infection, a spokesman for her People's Party said. He said the 38-year-old former prime minister would remain in Karachi's Lady Dufferin Hospital for a couple of days.

Miyazawa: U.S.-Japan ties strong

NEW YORK (AP) — Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa said the United States and Japan have been making progress in reducing their huge trade imbalance and dramatic moves should not be expected after President Bush's visit to Tokyo. "The United States and Japan have been discussing these problems for 10 years and yes, we have made progress," Mr. Miyazawa said referring to the \$41 billion trade imbalance. "But after one meeting not so much can be done." He said auto exports to Japan have been increasing in the past few years, but added that "some of the agreements brought out things that should have been done years ago... to narrow the gap." He did not give details. Mr. Miyazawa was speaking in English in an interview with Robert Novak on Cable News Network.

Paul Simon kicks off S. African tour

JOHANNESBURG (R) — American singer Paul Simon kicked off his South African tour before a meager, almost all-white crowd and black radical groups who had vowed to disrupt his six concerts claimed victory. Only about 15,000 people, around 200 of them black, attended the opening concert which organisers had predicted would draw over 70,000. The radical Azanian Youth Organisation (AZAYO), whose members demonstrated outside the Johannesburg stadium concert venue, said thousands of blacks had responded to its call to stay away in support of a cultural boycott against white rule. "This is victory for the black people of South Africa. It shows that black people put liberation before entertainment," AZAYO President Thami Mceerwa said. African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela had urged South Africans to attend the show. Simon said earlier in the week he hoped his concerts in Johannesburg and three other cities, featuring South African artists such as Stimela and Miriam Makeba, would unify the divided country.